

Lesson 1: What is an Alabama Veteran?

Part 1: World War One and Alabama's Role

Part A: World War One

Vocabulary Words: conflict, draftees, volunteers, killed in action. (See definitions at end of article)

World War One was also called the Great War because over 100 countries were involved in the **conflict**. The leaders on one side were Germany, Turkey, and Austria-Hungary. Many countries supported these leaders. The leaders on the other side were England, France, Russia, and the United States. These leaders had many supporters, too. The war started in 1914 and ended in 1918. The United States joined the war near the end, in April of 1917. How did the countries participate in the war? Some countries sent their soldiers to fight, but not all countries did that. Other countries sent materials and supplies to the people fighting the war. Some countries only promised to give their support. The map below shows the countries in Europe. Find the countries that were in the war.



The United States sent more than two million soldiers to Europe to fight in the war. From Alabama, the U.S. sent 74,000 **draftees**. The government also sent 5,000 National Guardsmen and 7,000 **volunteers**. The soldiers fought the enemy using guns and other ammunition while standing in trenches, which are long, deep rows cut out of the ground. More than 2,500 Alabamians were **killed in action** while fighting from the trenches. In addition, almost 4,000 died from wounds or disease.

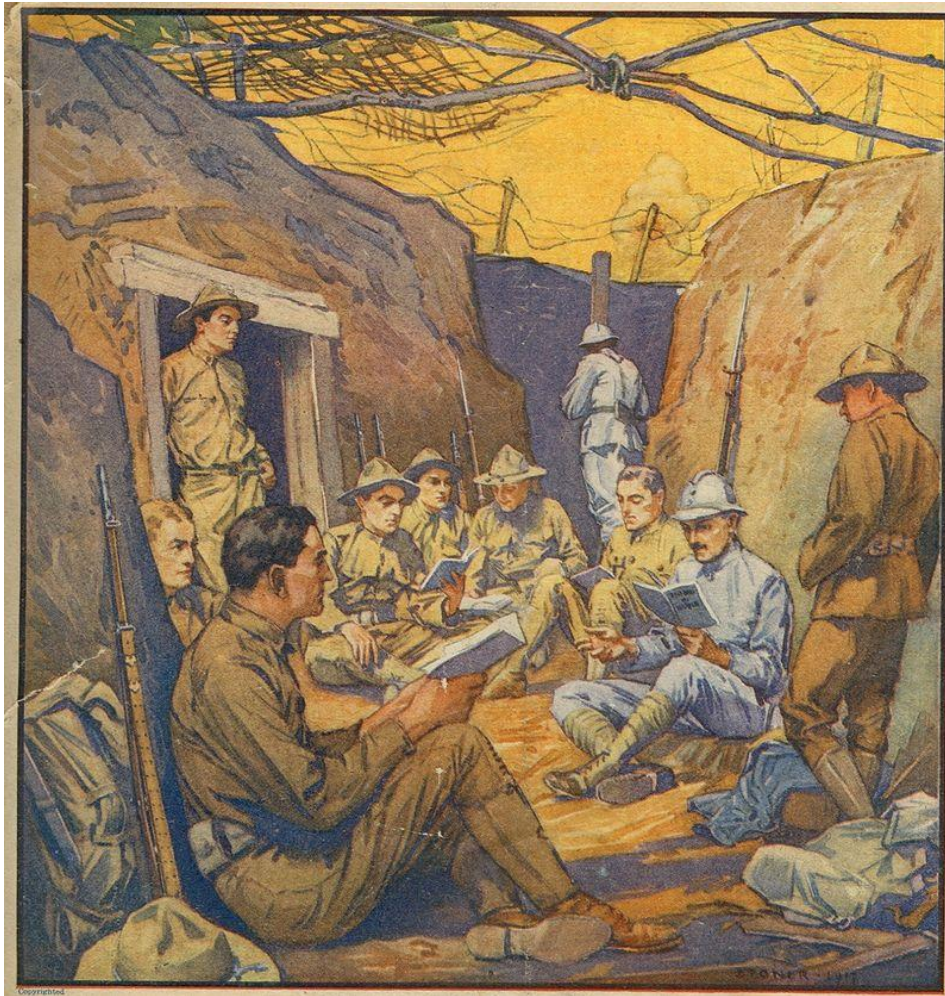
Trench Warfare in World War One



Picture Courtesy of  LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



Trenches in France: July 1916. One soldier keeps watch while the others sleep. Photo by Ernest Brooks. This is photograph [Q 3990](#) from the collections of the [Imperial War Museums](#) (collection no. 1900-13)



"Studying French in the Trenches", The Literary Digest, October 20, 1917

When there was no immediate fighting, the soldiers had time to read or study or write home.

While the soldiers were in Europe fighting, Alabamians worked very hard at home to support the troops. They joined groups like the Red Cross, YMCA, and YWCA. Alabama women formed groups to sew clothing, can food and make money for the war by selling war stamps.



Red Cross Headquarters in Montgomery, 1918

The Red Cross was a large part of Alabama's home-front World War I effort. The headquarters in the picture, with two nurse volunteers standing in front, displays the flags of the Allies in the conflict, including that of the United States, Great Britain, and France.

Picture Courtesy of Alabama Department of Archives and History from the **Encyclopedia of Alabama**

YMCA Entertainers Perform for 89th Division Troops



PICTURE COURTESY OF [HTTP://WWW.WORLDWAR1.COM/DBC/YMCA.HTM](http://www.worldwar1.com/DBC/YMCA.HTM) THE DOUGHBOY CENTER



A front-line hut where the YMCA gave out food and drinks
Picture Courtesy of <http://www.worldwar1.com/dbc/ymca.htm> **The Doughboy Center**



YMCA Worker Corinne Francis Entertains Two Doughboys
The American soldiers fighting in World War One were nicknamed Doughboys. The American YMCA sent over 1470 people overseas to entertain the soldiers.

Picture Courtesy of **The Doughboy Center**: <http://www.worldwar1.com/dbc/ymca.htm>

World War One: Part One: Vocabulary Words

1. **Conflict:** a struggle for power, property, or other things.

In the Story: World War One was a conflict because countries tried to take over the land of other countries.

2. **Draftees:** people who the government said had to become soldiers.

In the Story: In 1917 the United States joined the fighting in World War One. The military needed more people to fight so they created what was called the draft. This meant that many young people were required to serve in the military. Required to serve means that they had to do what the government said to do or they would be breaking the law and could go to prison. The people who were required to serve were called draftees.

3. **Volunteers:** people who decided to help with the war without being required to serve.

In the Story: 7,000 volunteers fought in WWI.

4. **Killed in Action:** this means that the men who were involved in the fighting were killed during the fighting. A man who was killed in action was called a KIA.

In the Story: more than 2,500 people from Alabama were killed in action which means that they lost their lives while fighting.