

Museum of World Treasures

World War I Vocabulary List

- All entries pertain directly to artifacts or signs in our exhibits.

Trench – A large structured hole in the ground that defends troops from opposing forces in battle. The first trenches were castle and fort moats.

Trench scope – A device used in trenches to look up into no man's land in between the trenches.

Stalemate – when a conflict's resolution seems impossible. Trench warfare caused stalemates during the war.

Brodie helmet – a steel helmet. During the first year of the war, metal helmets were not offered to troops. The Brodie helmet significantly reduced the number of head injuries.

Lewis Gun – a type of machine gun commonly used on aircraft during World War I.

Machine Gun – a fully automatic weapon used to fire bullets in rapid succession.

Water-Cooled – A type of machine gun that uses a barrel covered in a water jacket that cooled the easily-heated mechanisms. Sometimes soldiers would be forced to urinate in the jackets to keep their weapons operational.

Tank – A response to the stalemate created by trench warfare. The first successful tanks were used during World War I by the British, French, and Russians.

Chemical Warfare – The use of toxic properties in battle and siege. More than 120,000 tons of gas was used during World War I. Chlorine, Phosgene, and Mustard gasses were used to harm enemy troops.

Trench Knife or "Knuckle Duster" – Often a triangular shaped blade used in close combat with enemies. Sometimes these knives had brass knuckles on the handles.

Kaiser Wilhelm II- Ruler of Germany during World War I.

Western Front – The contested armed frontier lands that were fought over.

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