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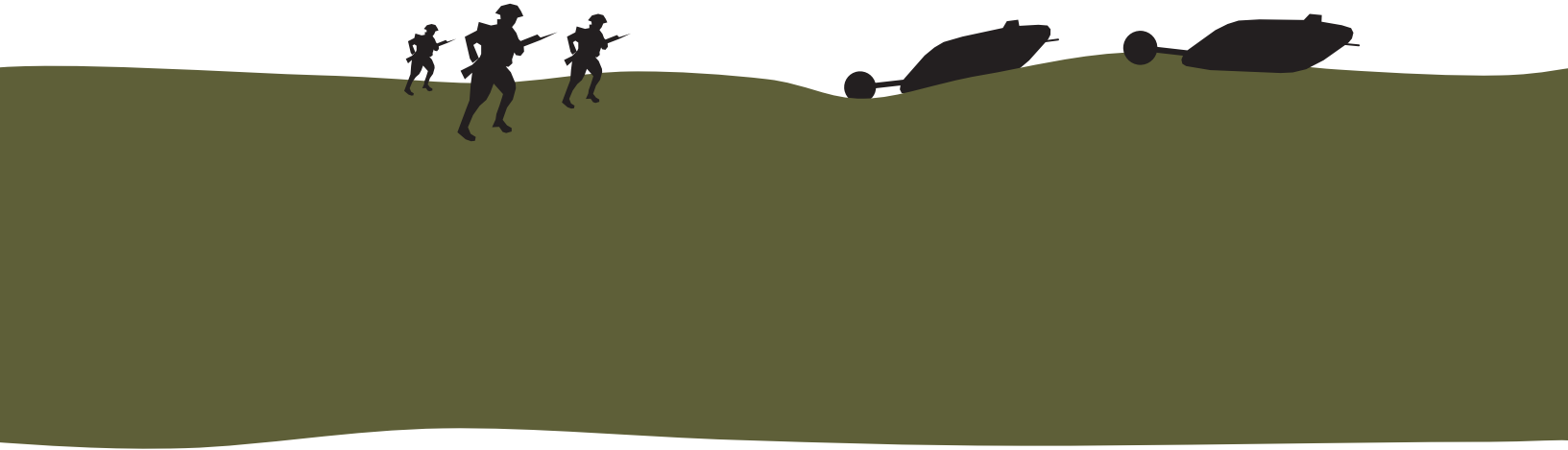


25th/26th
PAGE 1000 20



THE FIRST WORLD WAR

Faithful Under Fire



We will remember them



faithful (adj.)

- 1. Loyal. Showing true and constant support.*
- 2. Doing what is right.*
- 3. Trusting God.*

Conscientious, dependable, devoted, dutiful, honest, honourable, loving, obedient, sincere, steadfast, trustworthy, truthful, upright.

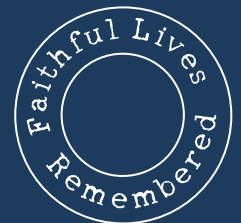


THE FIRST WORLD WAR

Faithful Under Fire



Mark Philpott



BRIEFING

You are about to gather intelligence about the First World War in this unique book.

🎯 1- You will identify key information about the war on the land, at sea, in the sky, and at home.

🎯 2- You will learn about some of the Christian men and women who served in the war, to find out what their lives were like.

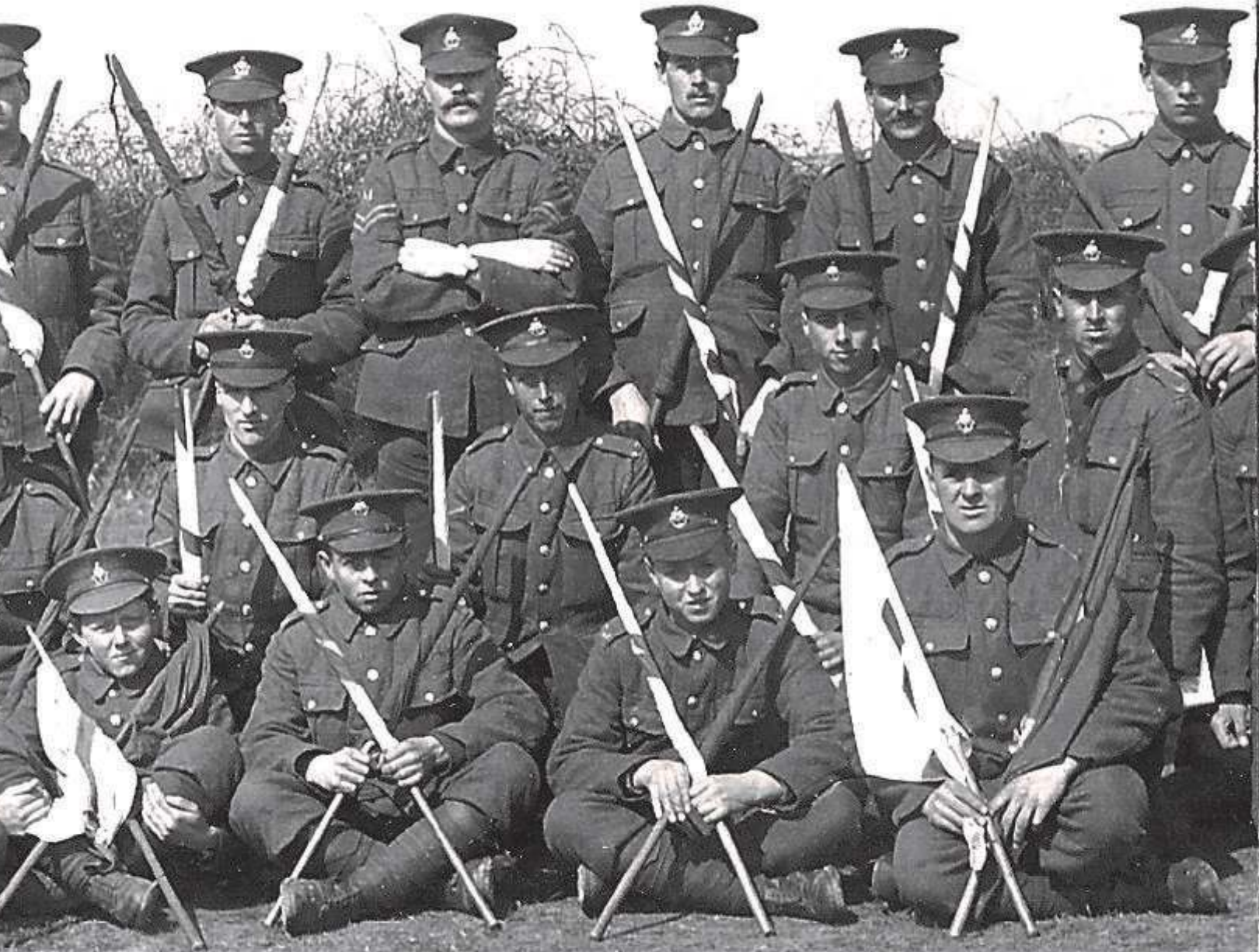
🎯 3- You will discover some important Bible truths, and be given life lessons from the experiences of these men and women.

A Christian soldier, called in the Bible a 'soldier of Jesus Christ,' is someone who knows their sin before God, and has been brought to trust in Jesus for forgiveness, and who serves him. We pray that the Lord will make you a Christian soldier, and may this book point out your real enemies and the only source of true peace.

At the back of this book you will find a **glossary**, where there is information on some of the special 'war words,' which will help you as you look through this book.



A group of signallers. Using flags to pass messages was an important skill in the First World War because two-way radios were still in development.



Men of the 23rd Infantry, US Army, on the Western Front, 1918. They are among trees that have had their branches blown off by the fighting.



CONTENTS

Faithful Under Fire		8
When, Where, Why and Who		10
A Call to Arms		14
On the Front Line		18
Animals at War		22
On the Waves		28
Under the Sea		32
Life on the Home Front		36
Air Raids		40
Warplanes		44
Inventions		48
Caring for the Wounded		52
Lest We Forget		56

FAITHFUL UNDER FIRE



The First World War was the first truly modern war. Although old-fashioned methods like cavalry charges and using carrier pigeons were still used, tanks and fighter planes were developed and used to deadly effect. It has set the pattern for every major war since.

The war happened several generations ago, and there is now no one alive who fought in the war. But their stories haven't been forgotten. People have left behind accounts of courage, pain and endurance.

Amongst the millions of people caught up in the war were believers—Christians who trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ to save them from their sins—who have told stories of how they trusted God, and how God helped them in their time of need. They were men and women who stayed faithful to the Lord their God when under attack from the enemy, and when they found themselves in all sorts of desperate and difficult situations.

This book tells some of their stories. We should never forget what happened. It makes us realise how thankful we should be for the peace and freedom that we have in our time. And if we are ever caught up in war, or even in difficult times in our own lives, may we learn from the example set by these faithful people. What may we learn? Read the rest of this book to find out ...

DID YOU KNOW?

Steel helmets were not issued until part-way through the war. They must have saved thousands of lives.

British troops defending a position in France, as shown on a wartime postcard.



WHEN, WHERE, WHY AND WHO



When?

The war started in **August 1914** and finished in **November 1918**—it was just over four years long. This was about 100 years ago.

Life was quite different to what it is now. Many of the things we have in our lives didn't exist, or were only available to rich people. Look at the things below to see how different life was.

INTELLIGENCE

Although the Bible was written a long time ago, it can help us understand things like the First World War, and our lives today. This is because human nature never changes. The Bible tells us that since Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden, everyone has pride in their hearts. This can result in war.

Everyday life in 1914 - what was it like?



Computers and mobile phones weren't invented. Not many people had telephones. To make a call you had to ring an Operator.



Your toilet probably would have been outside in a shed. You may have had your bath out in the yard (garden).



Cars were invented a few years before the war, and you had to be rich to own one. They were slow and uncomfortable.



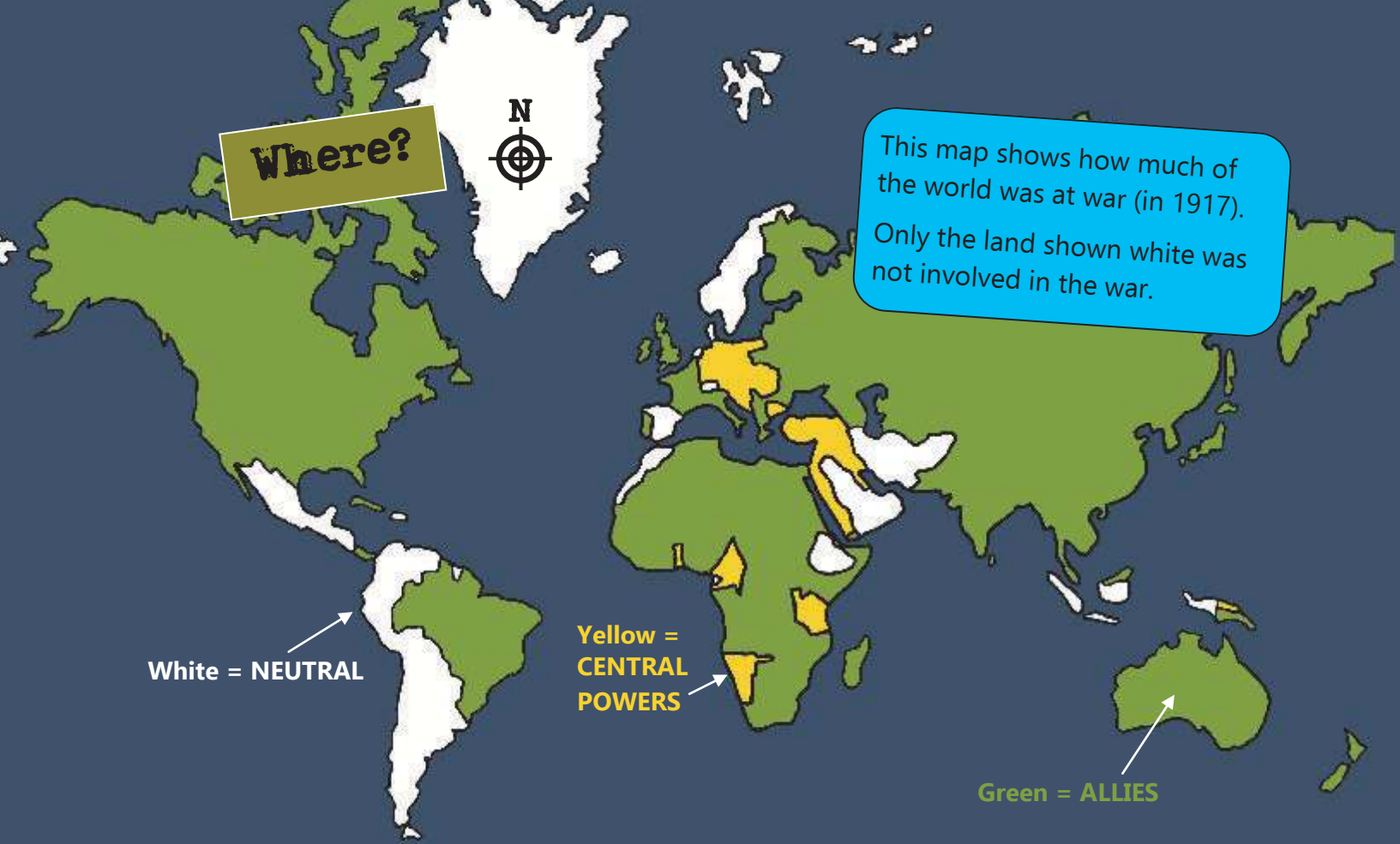
Kettles and irons had to be heated on the stove. The stove kept the house warm. There was no fridge to keep food fresh.



Light bulbs had been invented, but many people still relied on candles or oil/gas lamps for light.



Overseas travel would all have been by ship. The plane was a new invention, and was not able to carry many passengers.



Why did it become a world war?

Before the war, some of the countries in Europe, such as Britain, Germany and France, had empires, that is, they ruled other lands around the world. Some countries also made an agreement, and said they would help each other in time of war. Russia, France and Britain were one main group (**ALLIES**), and Germany, Austria-Hungary and Bulgaria were another (**CENTRAL POWERS**). Because of this, when war broke out, it wasn't limited to Europe. It quickly became a world war. (The USA joined in 1917). Find out more on the next page.

What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? (Matthew 16:26)

HOW IT ALL STARTED

Whose fault was it?

DID YOU KNOW?

Some Christians believed that God allowed the First World War to happen as a **judgement** against sin. But they also believed that, despite God's judgements, he also showed great **mercy** to his people.

Why did the war start?

People still argue about who was to blame for starting the war. It seems that several countries were at fault because they built up large armed forces. Then when they thought they were going to be attacked, they declared war first. What we do know is that Archduke Franz Ferdinand, who was due to rule Austria-Hungary, was shot. Austria-Hungary blamed Serbia for the shooting. Germany encouraged Austria-Hungary to declare war on Serbia. It seems Austria-Hungary wanted war because they already hated the Serbs.

INTELLIGENCE - who?

Taking sides

Allies

Central Powers

Russia



France



Britain and Empire



Italy



USA



Germany



Austria-Hungary



Bulgaria



Ottoman Empire (Turkey)

What happened next?

Russia, who wanted to help Serbia, declared war on Austria-Hungary. Russia and France had previously agreed to help each other in war, and Germany now got worried that it would be attacked by France on the west and Russia on the east, so the German Emperor Wilhelm II (the Second) decided to launch an attack on France before they attacked him. On the way, the Germans attacked Belgium. At this, Britain decided to join the war.



Wilhelm II

Where?

This map shows the national (country) borders in Europe just before the war started. In some places, the borders are quite different to what they are today. All the main countries who sided with Germany are shown **yellow**. The countries who fought for the Allies for some or all of the war are shown in **green**.

Austria-Hungary was an empire. It was split up after this war.



NORTH SEA

Norway
Sweden

Ireland
Britain

Air raids

Western Front

France

Germany

Austria-Hungary

Russia

Spain

Italy

Franz Ferdinand shot

Serbia
Bulgaria

BLACK SEA


Ottoman Empire (Turkey)

Gallipoli

Greece

MEDITERRANEAN SEA

RMS Royal Edward sunk

 Location which features in this book
Jutland

A CALL TO ARMS



Your Country Needs You

Germany, Austria-Hungary, Russia and France had large armies at the start of the war. This was partly because these countries had **conscription**. This means that men were forced to join the armed forces, whether they liked it or not.

At the start of the war, Britain did not have conscription. It relied on its regular (professional) army of about 250,000 men. Germany had four and a half million soldiers. The British Government started a big campaign to persuade men to join up—it was a 'call to arms.' Within a few weeks, 500,000 men had joined up, and by the end of 1915, two million had volunteered.

However, as the war continued, the number of volunteers dropped off. The British introduced conscription in 1916 for all men aged under 41.

DID YOU KNOW?
Russia had the biggest army. In 1914, they had about six million men, which is more than the population of Denmark.



Lord Kitchener, the Secretary of State for War, in one of the most famous images ever made - posters like this encouraged men to join the army

INTELLIGENCE

More than 60 million men served in the war. That is similar to the population of the UK.

To fight, or not to fight?

Some people refused to join up when they were conscripted. Sometimes the reason was to do with their work. One of the other reasons was that they did not think it was right to fight. These people were called conscientious (say *con-she-en-shuss*) objectors, that is, they objected because of their conscience.



A sergeant leaves
home and family

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

Men who received a message telling them to join the King's army had to obey whether they liked it or not. When men, women, boys and girls hear about the King of Kings' message of salvation in Jesus, they don't want to listen because they are dead in sin. The Bible tells us that God's power and love are so great that the people he calls, to join his army of Christian soldiers, shall be made willing. The Holy Spirit makes Jesus so precious, they are drawn to him in love.

Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power. (Psalm 110:3)

Breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army. (Ezekiel 37:10)

REMEMBERING ...

JOHN GOSDEN, NO. 500247

RAMC, awarded the Military Medal for bravery

When the war started, Christians had different thoughts about whether it was right for Britain to enter the war, and whether it was right to fight. Some thought it right to join up and serve the King; some thought it wrong to have anything to do with the war at all. John Gosden did not want to carry a gun, but he wanted to help people in trouble. Here is what he did.

Instead of being a soldier with a gun, who could kill people, John decided to be a soldier who saved lives, by serving in the Royal Army Medical Corps (RAMC) as a stretcher-bearer. This meant being in a group of two or four men who would go out and bring back wounded soldiers from the battlefield. This was an extremely dangerous job. Not only did they not have a gun for self-defence, but they had to go into the fight and carry wounded soldiers. They were very vulnerable to being shot. Nevertheless, after training, John could say:

I shall never forget, when walking across a parade ground in the north of England, on the eve of going to France, during the First World War, feeling a little of that word in the middle of chaos and trouble: 'Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.'

Once he had got to France, John was thrown into the action. Under heavy gunfire, he went alone to help a young wounded soldier, and was himself wounded when he was there. For his bravery on the battlefield, John was awarded the Military Medal.





**LIFE
LESSON**

Some people may have thought John was a coward not wanting to carry a gun. But perhaps, being a stretcher-bearer, he needed more bravery than a regular soldier. People often think Christians are weak, that they only trust God because normal life is too tough for them. To be a Christian takes courage. We may be mocked for believing and trusting in God. The Apostle Paul tells believers to come boldly to the throne of grace (in prayer), to seek help in time of need. He also says to stand fast, that is, not be moved away from trusting Jesus. See if you can find Paul's description of a Christian soldier in the Bible (Ephesians 6:10 onwards).

Troops march
off to war

DID YOU KNOW?

If you ran away from the army, you were called a deserter. When captured, you may have been shot.

ON THE FRONT LINE



Trench warfare, Western Front

When the war started, some commanders thought the war would be over very quickly. They dug trenches to provide some safety from machine-gun fire. They thought that it would be possible to send troops across to the enemy trenches to capture them, and then advance to win the war.

Machine guns killed so many soldiers during an attack, it seemed virtually impossible to win any new land. From about November 1914, some trenches ended up being used for months or years. They weren't intended to be used like this. They were horrible places, with little shelter from the rain, and some of them would flood so much that soldiers had to stand in deep water. Rats were so common they gave up trying to get rid of them.

War and peace


Soldiers were in near constant danger on the front line. It was not safe to stick your head up and have a look towards the enemy because you were likely to be shot. The noise of explosions could be almost constant. This noise and stress caused thousands of soldiers to suffer terrible mental trouble called 'shell shock.' However, one of the most remarkable things about the war was a number of ceasefires during Christmas 1914 when, in some places along the front, both sides stopped firing. The Allies heard singing coming from the German trenches. They were singing 'Silent night, holy night.' The Allies started singing carols too. Soon both sides met each other in no-man's-land and exchanged small gifts. But before long the shooting began all over again.

INTELLIGENCE

The expression 'over the top' comes from this war, when men had to climb out of their trenches to attack the enemy.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Allies threw over 70 million hand grenades, and fired over 100 million shells/mortars.



Men are ordered
'over the top'
to attack

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

Soldiers had to go 'over the top' from their trenches into no-man's-land, into machine-gun fire. This was a terrible ordeal and many were killed straight away. The Bible tells us that, for those believers who went 'over the top' and were killed, death could not keep them from God's love.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, ... or peril, or sword? ... Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. (Romans 8:35,37)

REMEMBERING ...

SERGEANT WALTER MOON

Killed in Action in France, July 1916, aged 23

Walter Moon was one of four brothers from near Tunbridge Wells, England. His first experience under fire was at the Battle of Loos (Western Front), when his battalion fought bravely. Soon after, Walter was nearly killed. While walking through a wood he stopped to speak to a sergeant of the Canadian troops, and a German sniper fired at them. Walter would afterwards write about it:



The bullet passed through my right chest pocket and wounded the sergeant. Poor fellow got a nasty hit in the shoulder. I got a bit of a shock; felt the bullet strike me, but did not know where it had gone. Next day I had to get something out of the pocket and found the bullet had gone through my paybook and out the other side; on its way it partly crumpled the frame on my picture of Lily. You will understand it was a wonderful deliverance, and I know it was the Lord's doings. Going up to the trenches earlier in the afternoon these words were laid upon my mind, 'The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.' I do hope I shall be given grace to be truly thankful for so striking a deliverance.

Walter and his three brothers were all tragically killed in summer 1916. His father wrote, "Oh what a mercy to feel the Lord showed them what they were as sinners, and brought them to his feet, seeking for mercy where alone mercy can be found! Of course, I nor their mother will ever get over these painful losses. But we do feel that the pain is softened with Jesus' blood, and I trust we have been able to submit to the Lord and say, 'Thy will be done!'"

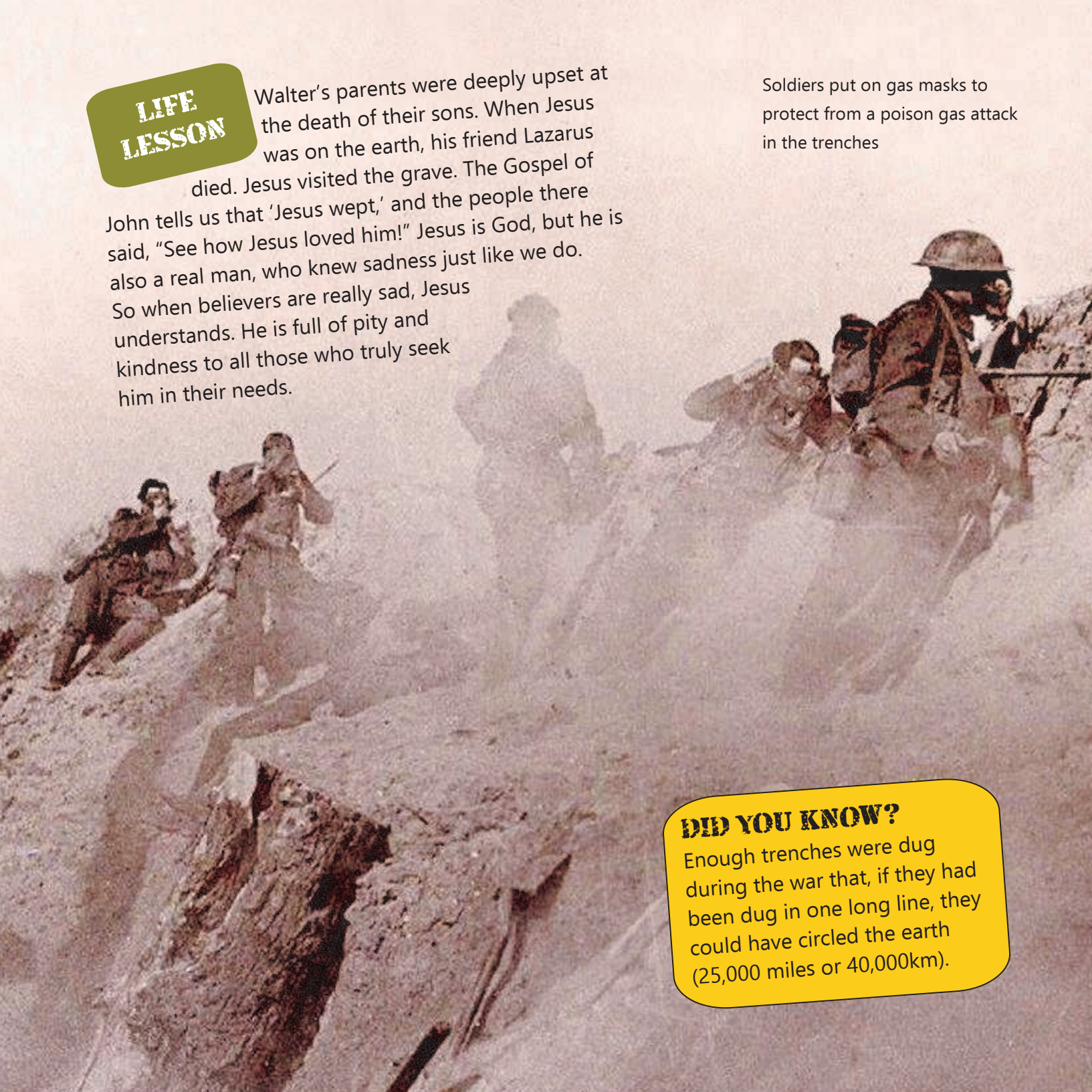
LIFE LESSON

Walter's parents were deeply upset at the death of their sons. When Jesus was on the earth, his friend Lazarus died. Jesus visited the grave. The Gospel of John tells us that 'Jesus wept,' and the people there said, "See how Jesus loved him!" Jesus is God, but he is also a real man, who knew sadness just like we do. So when believers are really sad, Jesus understands. He is full of pity and kindness to all those who truly seek him in their needs.

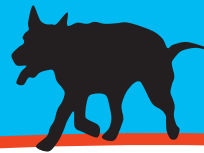
Soldiers put on gas masks to protect from a poison gas attack in the trenches

DID YOU KNOW?

Enough trenches were dug during the war that, if they had been dug in one long line, they could have circled the earth (25,000 miles or 40,000km).



ANIMALS AT WAR



Man and beast

When the First World War started, petrol and diesel engines and two-way radios were relatively new inventions, and tanks had yet to be invented. As a result, the armed forces still relied heavily on animals for transport, for communication (sending messages), and for attacking the enemy. The main animals used were:-

- ◆ Horses—for carrying loads, pulling wagons and big guns.
- ◆ Dogs—for carrying messages between trenches, for guarding, and for taking first aid to the wounded.
- ◆ Pigeons—for carrying messages over longer distances.

Animals of all sorts were also kept to help morale (good spirits) amongst the men.

INTELLIGENCE

The British used over one million horses and mules. They ate over five million tons of food. The army had 19,000 men just to get the horses ready to go to war.

DID YOU KNOW?

A mule is a cross between a horse and a donkey. They have a powerful kick.

War horses

Although nearly eight out of ten horses were used for transporting equipment and men, some were used for old-fashioned cavalry charges. Such charges soon became rare on the Western Front because machine guns made this sort of attack hopeless. Even so, at the end of the war, the British Army still had over 75,000 cavalry horses—that is enough to stand in a line 180 kilometres or 110 miles long. From 1916 the tank started to make cavalry horses redundant.

Just like men, horses suffered in the war. But it seems there were many cases where the horses were loved and well looked after.

German Hussars (lightly armed cavalry)
come charging out of the dawn mist



SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

Horses played a big role in this war, just as they have done in many battles down through the ages. In the Bible, God tells Job that he made horses to be strong and brave. God told Job that he had made horses to be strong and brave because he wanted Job to remember that he, as the Creator, is all powerful and all wise. If God's creatures are much stronger than we are, how much more powerful must God be! Because God is all powerful, his people can feel safe.

Hast thou [Job] given the horse strength? ... Canst thou make him afraid? ... He paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in his strength: he goeth on to meet the armed men. He ... is not affrighted; neither turneth he back from the sword. (Job 39:19-22)