

Worksheet 9. Action

Most of the men who passed through Fovant Camp were there to be trained as infantrymen. Having completed their six week's basic training these men were then considered ready to go into battle. For an infantryman during World War I that usually meant trench warfare on the Western Front. (see the map on the next page).

Units stationed in the Fovant area during World War I

March – July 1915

Oxford and Bucks Pioneers • Royal Engineers • 78th Brigade • 26th Division • A.S.C. • Berkshires • Worcestershires • Gloucestershires.

August 1915 – January 1916

31st Yorkshire Division • 31st Divisional Artillery • 15th, 16th and 18th Battalions West Yorks • Durham Light Infantry • 31st Training Battalion, R.E. • East Yorks • R.O. Yeomanry

January – May 1916

4th, 6th, 9th City of London Regiment • 5th Battalion London Rifle Brigade • 3rd Battalion Queen Victoria Rifles • 8th Battalion Post Office Rifles • 7th City of London Regiment (Shiny Seventh) • 1st, 2nd, 11th, 12th Wessex Divisional Training, A.S.C.

August 1916

The London Battalions were amalgamated and the Camps occupied by Australians. A number of German prisoners of war were brought to the Royal Engineers camp and were still there until the end of the war.

January – March 1917

The 59th Division arrived from Ireland where they had been stationed during the 1916 rebellion. (Lincolnshires, Leicestershires, Sherwood Foresters, Notts and Derbyshires).

March 1917

Australian units • Oxford and Bucks Training Battalion • Berkshires • Dorsetshires Training Battalion • Warwickshires.

From October the camps were mainly occupied by Australian troops except for West Farm where there was a Labour Battalion. With the ending of the war Fovant became a Demobilisation Camp.



Waiting for the whistle signalling time to start climbing the ladders.



Up the ladders and over the top.



Walking, fully laden, through No Man's Land to face the enemy in their opposing trenches. (What was No Man's Land?)

With few exceptions all the men in the regiments mentioned in the list on this page would eventually be transported to one of the World War I battlefields. Although there were other areas of conflict associated with World War I, for most of these men their fighting destination would be the trenches of the European Western Front.

Most counties had their own regiment. Access the website of your county's regiment and see what you can find out about it.

Villages and towns worldwide will have their own war memorials. Visit your local memorial, note the names on it and remember that the men recorded there were real people not just names inscribed on stone.

Since there can hardly have been a family in the country who did not have one of its members in the service of King and Country during World War I, you have probably got an ancestor who was involved. Your parents or grandparents may well be able to tell you. Ask them.



World War I started in earnest in early in September 1914 when the German Army invaded Belgium. They had advanced as far as the Belgian town of Ypres before battle was joined with the allies in October of that year. Swiftly moving battles followed during which each side tried to outflank the other with limited success. After some initial German advances, stalemate was reached and both sides dug in along a long line of battlefields which eventually stretched from south west Belgium to north eastern France. This line, which remained largely unchanged for most of the war, was known collectively as the Western Front.

Along this line fierce battles raged back and forth between opposing trenches. Ground was repeatedly gained and lost to no great advantage to either side. The numbers of men killed, wounded or missing were horrendous.