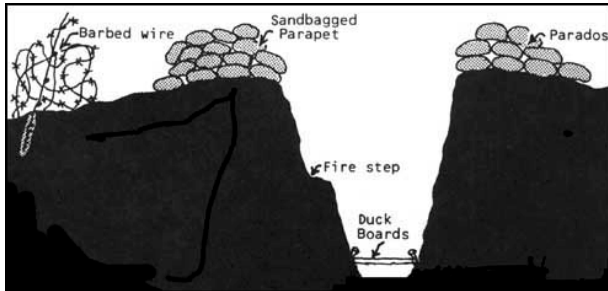


Trench Warfare in the First World War ⁽¹⁾

How the trench system was organised



The Trench

Trenches were first dug by the British and French Armies in Northern France. The aim of trenches was to act as a barrier against the rapid advance of the German army from which a counter attack could be made. At first they were quickly and easily constructed using few materials other than sandbags and a shovel.

There were many different types of trench. The one above is typical of a front line trench, where fighting was expected to occur. Below is a diagram that outlines what a section of trenches may have looked like.

Task

- Copy the diagram of the Trench into your exercise book and label it.
- Write one or two sentences to explain what each part of the trench was used for.

Example: Sandbags were used to make a Parados at the top of the rear side of the trench. The Parados was placed here to prevent shrapnel from explosions from hurting the men in the trench.



Development of the Trench

As it became obvious that the Trench was not going to be the short-term barrier it was originally intended to be, networks of trenches were constructed. These trenches had to ensure the safety of the soldiers who would live, eat, sleep and fight there. Often these trench systems were as close as 20 metres away from the enemy who would face them across No Man's Land.

Activity

- Using a full sheet of A5 plain paper, draw a map of the trench system illustrated above. Include BOTH armies trench systems.
- Colour the map and create a KEY to show what each colour represents: for example, RED might be used to illustrate where No Man's land is on your map.
- Using only the information provided in this lesson. Write a paragraph suggesting what likely problems soldiers living in trenches may have to endure.