

3 War Affects the World

TERMS & NAMES

- unrestricted submarine warfare
- total war
- rationing
- propaganda
- armistice

MAIN IDEA

World War I spread to several continents and required the full resources of many governments.

WHY IT MATTERS NOW

The war propelled the United States to a new position of international power, which it retains today.

SETTING THE STAGE By early 1915, it was apparent to all the warring nations that swift victory had eluded them. As war on both European fronts promised to be a grim, drawn-out affair, all the Great Powers looked for new allies to tip the balance. They also sought new war fronts on which to achieve victory.

A Truly Global Conflict

Geographical widening of the war actually had begun soon after the conflict started. Japan entered the war on the Allies' side. The Ottoman Turks and later Bulgaria allied themselves with Germany and the Central Powers. That widened the conflict further. By early 1915, the only major neutral power left besides the United States was Italy. And Italy joined the Allies in April. None of these alliances gave an advantage to either side. But they did give military leaders more war zones in which to try to secure victory.

Fighting Rages Beyond Europe As the war dragged on, the Allies desperately searched for a way to end the stalemate. A promising strategy seemed to be to attack a region in the Ottoman Empire known as the Dardanelles. This narrow sea strait was the gateway to the Ottoman capital, Constantinople. By securing the Dardanelles, the Allies believed that they could take Constantinople, defeat the Turks, and establish a supply line to Russia. They might even be able to mount an offensive into the Austrian heartland by way of the Danube River.

The effort to take the Dardanelles strait began in February 1915. It was known as the Gallipoli campaign. British, Australian, New Zealand, and French troops made repeated assaults on the Gallipoli Peninsula on the western side of the strait. Turkish troops, some commanded by German officers, vigorously defended the region. By May, Gallipoli had turned into another bloody stalemate. Both sides dug trenches, from which they battled for the rest of the year. In December, the Allies gave up the campaign and began to evacuate. They had suffered about 250,000 casualties.

Despite the Allies' failure at Gallipoli, they remained determined to topple the Ottoman Empire. In Southwest Asia, the British helped Arab nationalists rise up against their Turkish rulers. Particularly devoted to the Arab cause was a British soldier named T. E. Lawrence. Better known as Lawrence of Arabia, he helped lead daring guerrilla raids against the Turks. With the help of the Arabs, Allied armies took control of Baghdad, Jerusalem, and Damascus.

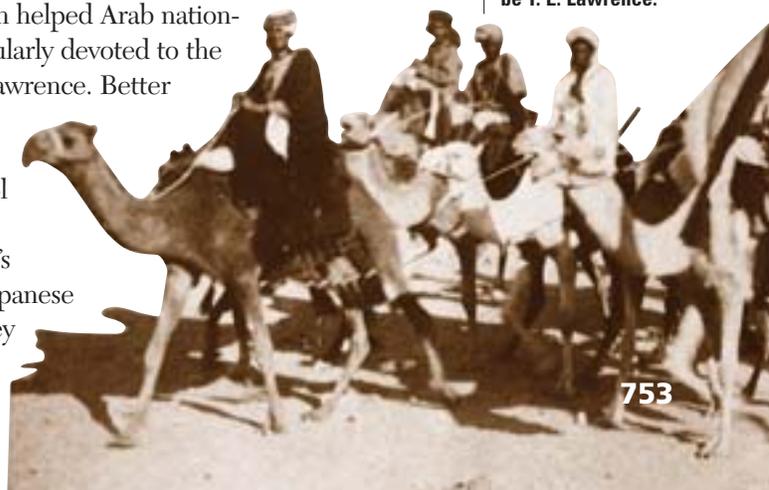
In various parts of Asia and Africa, Germany's colonial possessions came under assault. The Japanese quickly overran German outposts in China. They also captured Germany's Pacific island colonies.

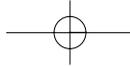


Background

Although the Ottoman Empire had greatly declined by World War I, it still ruled Arab lands in Southwest Asia.

Arab fighters patrol the desert on camels. The rider in front is believed to be T. E. Lawrence.





English and French troops attacked Germany's four African possessions. They seized control of three.

Elsewhere in Asia and Africa, the British and French recruited subjects in their colonies for the struggle. Fighting troops as well as laborers came from India, South Africa, Senegal, Egypt, Algeria, and Indochina. Many fought and died on the battlefield. Others worked to keep the frontlines supplied. Some colonial subjects wanted nothing to do with their European rulers' conflicts. Others volunteered in the hope that service would lead to their independence. This was the view of Indian political leader Mohandas Gandhi, who supported Indian participation in the war. "If we would improve our status through the help and cooperation of the British," he wrote, "it was our duty to win their help by standing by them in their hour of need."

The United States Enters the War In 1917, the focus of the war shifted to the high seas. That year, the Germans intensified the submarine warfare that had raged in the Atlantic Ocean since shortly after the war began. By 1917, failed crops, as well as a British naval blockade, caused severe food shortages in Germany. Desperate to strike back, Germany decided to establish its own naval blockade around Britain. In January 1917, the Germans announced that their submarines would sink without warning any ship in the waters around Britain. This policy was called **unrestricted submarine warfare**.

The Germans had tried this policy before. On May 7, 1915, a German submarine, or U-boat, had sunk the British passenger ship *Lusitania*. The attack left 1,198 people dead, including 128 U.S. citizens. Germany claimed that the ship had been carrying ammunition—which turned out to be true. Nevertheless, the American public was outraged. President Woodrow Wilson sent a strong protest to Germany. After two further attacks, the Germans finally agreed to stop attacking neutral and passenger ships.

However, the Germans returned to unrestricted submarine warfare in 1917. They knew it might lead to war with the United States. They gambled that their naval

THINK THROUGH HISTORY

A. Summarizing

How did Europe's colonial subjects help in the war effort?

Vocabulary

blockade: the forced closing off of a city or other area to traffic and communication through the use of ships or land forces.

The World at War, 1914–1918





blockade would starve Britain into defeat before the United States could mobilize. Ignoring warnings by President Wilson, German U-boats sank three American ships.

In February 1917, another German action pushed the United States closer to war. The British intercepted a telegram from Germany's foreign secretary, Arthur Zimmermann, to the German ambassador in Mexico. The message said that Germany would help Mexico "reconquer" the land it had lost to the United States if Mexico would ally itself with Germany. The British decoded the message and gave it to the U.S. government.

When the Zimmermann note was made public, Americans called for war against Germany. Even before news of the note, many Americans had sided with the Allies. A large part of the American population felt a bond with England. The two nations shared a common ancestry and language, as well as similar democratic institutions and legal systems. In addition, reports—some true and others not—of German war atrocities stirred anti-German sentiment in the United States. More important, America's economic ties with the Allies were far stronger than those with the Central Powers. America traded with Great Britain and France more than twice as much as with Germany.

The Zimmermann note simply proved to be the last straw. On April 2, 1917, President Wilson asked Congress to declare war. The United States entered the war on the side of the Allies.

War Affects the Home Front

By the time the United States joined the Allies, the war had been going on for nearly three years. In those three years, Europe had lost more men in battle than in all the wars of the previous three centuries. The war had claimed the lives of millions and had changed countless lives forever. The Great War, as the conflict came to be known, affected everyone. It touched not only the soldiers in the trenches, but civilians as well. It affected not just military institutions, but also political, economic, and social institutions.

Governments Wage Total War World War I soon became a **total war**. This meant that countries devoted all their resources to the war effort. In Britain, Germany, Austria, Russia, and France, the entire force of government was dedicated to winning the conflict.

In each country, the wartime government took control of the economy. Governments told factories what to produce and how much. Numerous facilities were converted to munitions factories. Nearly every able-bodied civilian was put to work. Unemployment in many European countries nearly disappeared. European governments even enlisted the help of foreign workers. For example, thousands of civilians were deported from German-occupied Belgium and France to work in Germany as farm and factory laborers. Britain and France recruited Chinese, West Indian, Algerian, and Egyptian laborers to work behind their lines at the front.

So many goods were in short supply that governments turned to **rationing**. Under this system, people could buy only small amounts of those items that were also needed for the war effort. Eventually, rationing covered a wide range of goods, from butter to shoe leather.

Governments also suppressed antiwar activity—sometimes forcibly. In addition, they censored news about the war. Many leaders feared

Background

Land Mexico considered "lost" to the United States included New Mexico, Texas, and Arizona.

Vocabulary

atrocities: an act of extreme cruelty or violence.

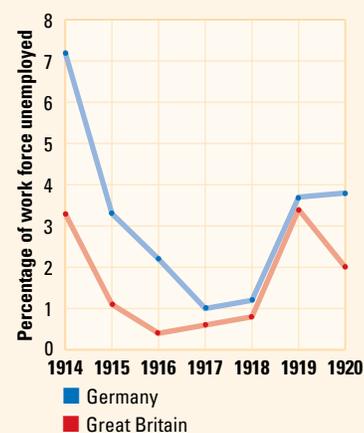
GlobalImpact

Influenza Epidemic

In the spring of 1918, a powerful new enemy emerged, threatening nations on each side of World War I. This "enemy" was a deadly strain of influenza. The Spanish flu, as it was popularly known, hit England and India in May. By the fall, it had spread through Europe, Russia, Asia, and to the United States.

The influenza epidemic killed soldiers and civilians alike. In India, at least 12 million people died of influenza. In Berlin, on a single day in October, 1,500 people died. In the end, this global epidemic was more destructive than the war itself, killing 20 million people worldwide.

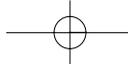
Unemployment in Germany and Britain



Source: *European Historical Statistics 1750–1975*

SKILLBUILDER: Interpreting Graphs

1. During which year did each country see its lowest unemployment rate?
2. Why might unemployment have been lowest during the war years?



In total war all citizens were called on to help in the war effort. Thus women were offered new employment opportunities. Pictured here are women workers at a French munitions factory.

that honest reporting of the war would turn people against it. Governments also used **propaganda**—one-sided information designed to persuade—to keep up morale and support for the war. One of the main instruments of propaganda was the war poster. In nations throughout Europe, striking, colorful posters urged support for the war by painting the enemy as monsters and allies as heroes. (See poster on page 747.)

The War's Impact on Women Total war meant that governments turned to help from women as never before. Thousands of women replaced men in factories, offices, and shops. Women built tanks and munitions, plowed fields, paved streets, and ran hospitals. They also kept troops supplied with food, clothing, and weapons. Although most women left the work force when the war ended, they changed many people's views of what women were capable of doing.

The Allies Win the War

With the United States finally in the war, the balance, it seemed, was about to tip in the Allies' favor. Before that happened, however, events in Russia gave Germany a victory on the Eastern Front.

Russia Withdraws from the War By March 1917, civil unrest in Russia—due in part to war-related shortages of food and fuel—had brought the czar's government to the brink of collapse. Czar Nicholas, faced with the

prospect of revolution, abdicated his throne on March 15. In his place a provisional government was established. The new government pledged to continue fighting the war. However, by 1917, nearly 5.5 million Russian soldiers had been wounded, killed, or taken prisoner. The war-weary Russian army refused to fight any longer.

Eight months later, a second revolution shook Russia (see Chapter 30). In November 1917, Communist leader Vladimir Ilyich Lenin seized power. Lenin insisted on ending his country's involvement in the war. One of his first acts was to offer Germany a truce. In March 1918, Germany and Russia signed the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, which ended the war between them.

The treaty was extremely hard on Russia. It required the Russian government to surrender lands to Germany that now include Finland, Poland, Ukraine, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. (See map on page 762.) Even though the treaty became invalid after the war, these nations still gained their independence.

A Failed Final Push Russia's withdrawal from the war at last allowed Germany to send nearly all its forces to the Western Front. In March 1918, the Germans mounted one final, massive attack on the Allies in France. More than 6,000 German cannons opened the offensive with the largest artillery attack of the entire war.

As in the opening weeks of the war, the German forces crushed everything in their path. By late May 1918, the Germans had again reached the Marne River. Paris was less than 40 miles away. Victory seemed within reach.

By this time, however, the German military had weakened. The effort to reach the Marne had exhausted men and supplies alike. Sensing this weakness, the Allies—with the aid of nearly 140,000 fresh American troops—launched a counterattack. Marshal Ferdinand Foch, the French commander of the Allied forces, used Americans to fill the gaps in his ranks. The U.S. soldiers were inexperienced but courageous and eager to

THINK THROUGH HISTORY

B. Summarizing

Describe how the governments of the warring nations fought a total war.

Vocabulary

abdicate: to formally give up a high office or responsibility.



World War I Time Line

1914	1916	1917	1918
<p>June 1914 Archduke Ferdinand and his wife are assassinated.</p> <p>July 1914 Austria-Hungary declares war on Serbia.</p> <p>July–August 1914 Russia, France, and Britain go to war against Germany and Austria-Hungary.</p>	<p>1916 Combatants suffer devastating losses at battles of Verdun and the Somme.</p>	<p>1917 United States enters the war.</p>	<p>March 1918 Russia withdraws from the war.</p>

July 1918
Allies defeat Germany at Second Battle of the Marne.

November 1918
Warring nations sign armistice ending the war.



British and German soldiers help one another during a break in the fighting.

fight. A British nurse, Vera Brittain, later recalled her joy in seeing the American reinforcements:

A VOICE FROM THE PAST

They were swinging rapidly toward Camiers, and though the sight of soldiers marching was now too familiar to arouse curiosity, an unusual quality of bold vigor in their swift stride caused me to stare at them with puzzled interest. They looked larger than ordinary men; their tall, straight figures were in vivid contrast to the undersized armies of pale recruits to which we had grown accustomed. . . . Then I heard an excited exclamation from a group of Sisters behind me. "Look! Look! Here are the Americans!"

VERA BRITAIN, *Testament of Youth*

THINK THROUGH HISTORY

C. Comparing How was the Second Battle of the Marne similar to the first?

In July 1918, the Allies and Germans clashed at the Second Battle of the Marne. Leading the Allied attack were some 350 tanks that rumbled slowly forward, smashing through the German lines. With the arrival of 2 million more American troops, the Allied forces began to advance steadily toward Germany.

Soon, the Central Powers began to crumble. First the Bulgarians and then the Ottoman Turks surrendered. In October, a revolution in Austria-Hungary brought that empire to an end. In Germany, soldiers mutinied, and the public turned on the Kaiser.

On November 9, 1918, Kaiser Wilhelm II was forced to step down. Germany declared itself a republic. A representative of the new German government met with Marshal Foch. In a railway car in a forest near Paris, the two signed an **armistice**, or an agreement to stop fighting. On November 11, World War I came to an end.

After four years of slaughter and destruction, the time had come to forge a peace settlement. Leaders of the victorious nations gathered outside Paris to work out the terms of peace. While these leaders had come with high hopes, the peace settlement they crafted left many feeling bitter and betrayed.

Section 3 Assessment

1. TERMS & NAMES

Identify

- unrestricted submarine warfare
- total war
- rationing
- propaganda
- armistice

2. TAKING NOTES

Using a chart like the one below, list the reasons why the United States entered World War I.

Reasons for U.S. Entry
1.
2.
3.
4.

3. ANALYZING ISSUES

In what ways was World War I truly a global conflict?

THINK ABOUT

- where the war was fought
- who participated in the war effort

4. ANALYZING THEMES

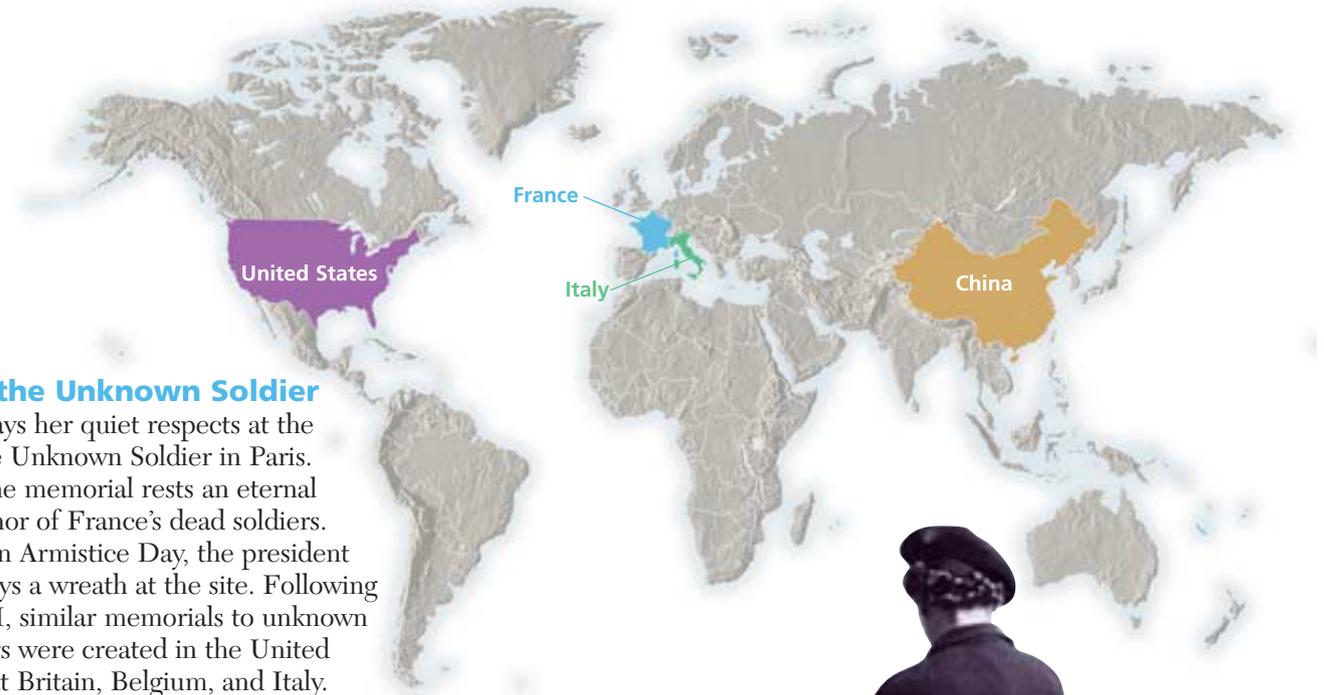
Economics How did the concept of total war affect the warring nations' economies?

THINK ABOUT

- the governments' new role in their economies
- the scarcity of food and other products
- the role of women
- unemployment rates during the war years

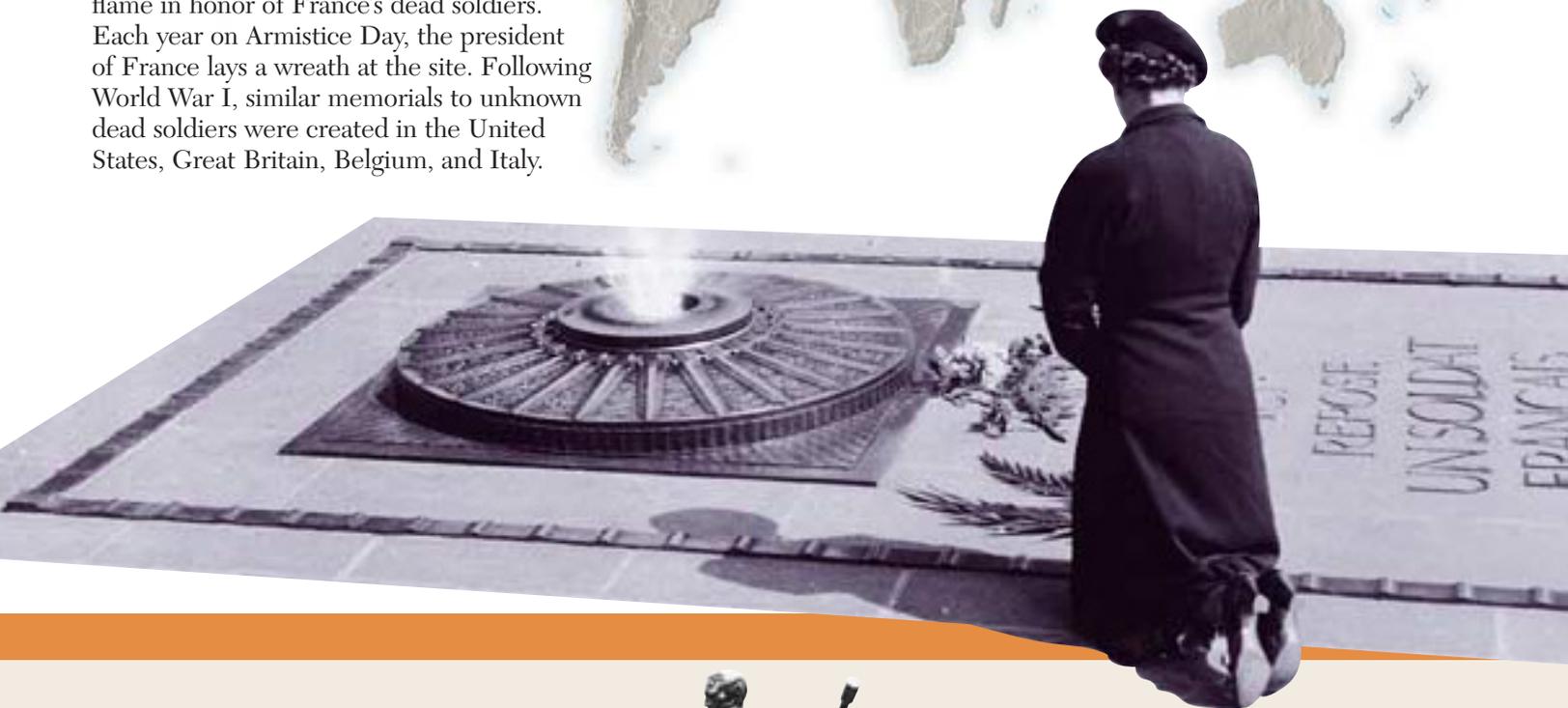
Honoring War Heroes

Throughout history, people around the world have shared in a somber, healing ritual: honoring their country's soldiers killed in battle. In many nations, people come together to honor those citizens who have fought and died for their country. After World War I, France built a ceremonial grave to honor all of its soldiers killed in the great conflict. From early times to today, other nations have paid their respects to their dead soldiers with medals, monuments, and parades.



Tomb of the Unknown Soldier

A woman pays her quiet respects at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Paris. On top of the memorial rests an eternal flame in honor of France's dead soldiers. Each year on Armistice Day, the president of France lays a wreath at the site. Following World War I, similar memorials to unknown dead soldiers were created in the United States, Great Britain, Belgium, and Italy.



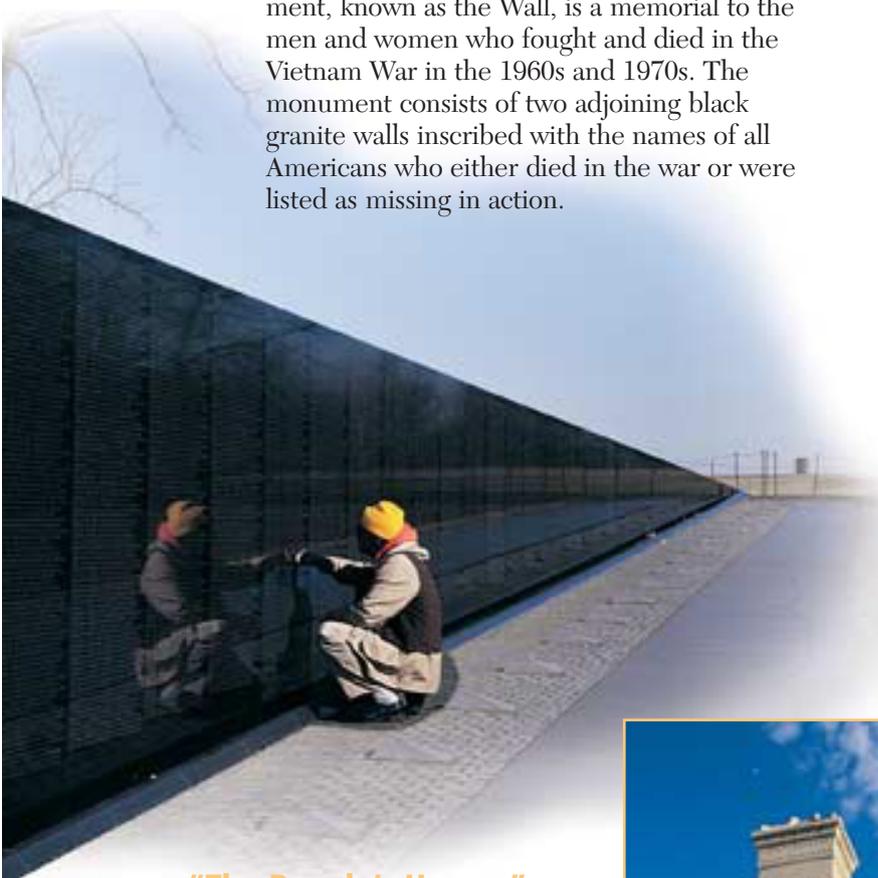
**a
closer
look** WORLD WAR I
MONUMENTS



This German war memorial was built in 1926 and placed in the courtyard of the Technical University in Berlin.

The Wall

A man pays tribute at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. The monument, known as the Wall, is a memorial to the men and women who fought and died in the Vietnam War in the 1960s and 1970s. The monument consists of two adjoining black granite walls inscribed with the names of all Americans who either died in the war or were listed as missing in action.

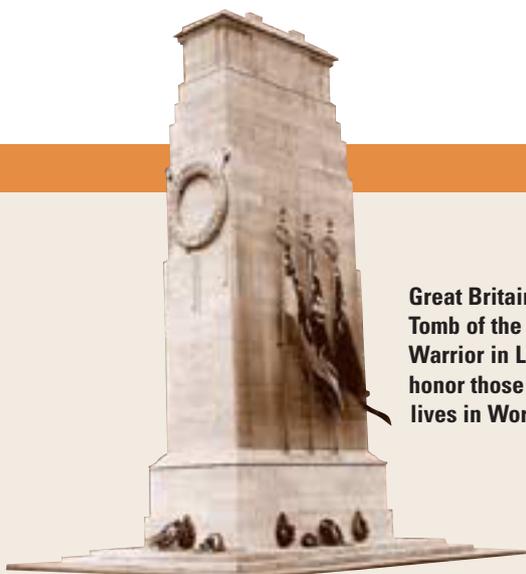


"The People's Heroes"

This monument is a tribute to the Chinese armed forces, officially known as the People's Liberation Army. The monument, which sits in Beijing, is called the Memorial to the People's Heroes. It is a tribute to the soldiers, past and present, who have taken part in the struggle to forge a Communist China, which began around 1946.



Great Britain built its own Tomb of the Unknown Warrior in London to honor those who lost their lives in World War I.



Trajan's Column

The Romans relied greatly on their powerful military to oversee a huge empire. Consequently, they glorified war and soldiers with numerous statues and monuments. Shown here is a detail from Trajan's Column, in Rome. The 100-foot-high column was dedicated in A.D. 113 to the emperor Trajan after he conquered Dacia. The column is a continuous spiral carving of soldiers and battle scenes.



Connect to History

Analyzing Motives Why do you think nations honor their dead soldiers?

 SEE SKILLBUILDER HANDBOOK, PAGE R5

Connect to Today

Designing Working with one or more students, design a memorial to your country's dead soldiers. Include any words or images that you feel convey your message. Present the memorial to the class.