

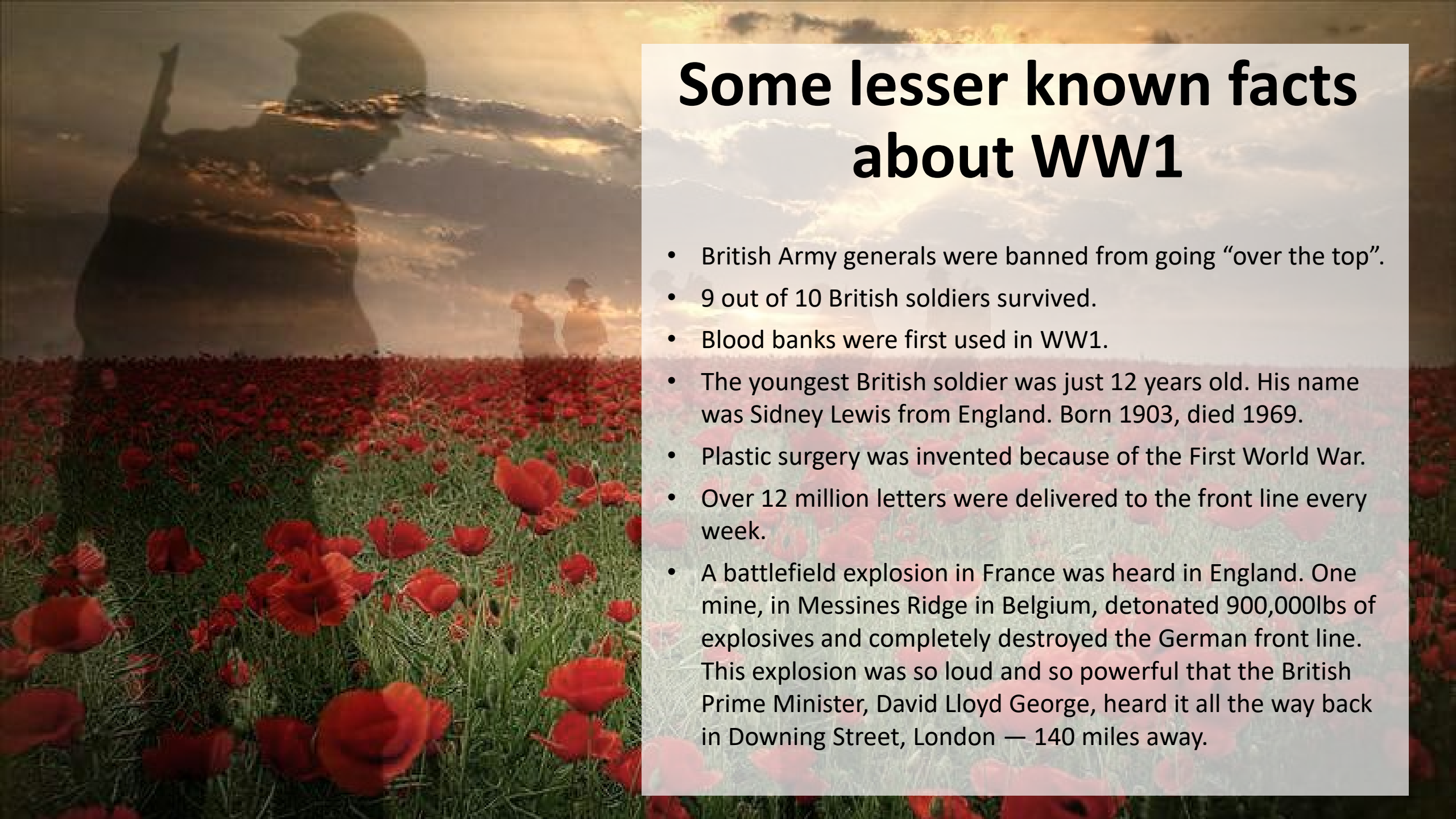


# WORLD WAR I

## THE GREAT WAR

by Calum Beatty

Scoil na Mainistreach



# Some lesser known facts about WW1

- British Army generals were banned from going “over the top”.
- 9 out of 10 British soldiers survived.
- Blood banks were first used in WW1.
- The youngest British soldier was just 12 years old. His name was Sidney Lewis from England. Born 1903, died 1969.
- Plastic surgery was invented because of the First World War.
- Over 12 million letters were delivered to the front line every week.
- A battlefield explosion in France was heard in England. One mine, in Messines Ridge in Belgium, detonated 900,000lbs of explosives and completely destroyed the German front line. This explosion was so loud and so powerful that the British Prime Minister, David Lloyd George, heard it all the way back in Downing Street, London — 140 miles away.



# The Stories of WW1

- The Heroes Tales
- The Christmas Truce
- The Most Memorable Battles

# Alvin York | 1887-1964

York was given the **medal of honour** for his bravery.

In 1918, 17 American soldiers were given the job of stopping some German machine guns. The Germans killed six of the Americans and wounded 3 more but York fought on and killed several German soldiers with his rifle before running out of ammo. Then 6 more German soldiers came charging at him with bayonets but York killed all of them with his pistol. York and his men then captured 132 prisoners and stopped the German machine guns that day.

When they returned to camp, Brigadier General Julian Robert Lindsey, said: "Well York, I hear you have captured the whole German army." York replied: "No sir. I got only 132."



# Carton De Wiart | 1880-1963

Adrian Carton de Wiart was a one eyed, one handed war hero who fought in three wars including WW1. He was shot in the face, head, stomach, ankle, leg, hip, and ear; survived two plane crashes; tunnelled out of a prisoner-of-war camp; and tore off his own fingers when a doctor refused to amputate them. He was known as the unkillable soldier.

In World War 1 he was severely injured on 8 occasions. Even though he lost an eye and a hand other soldiers reported seeing him pulling the pins of grenades out with his teeth and throwing them with his good arm during the battle of the Somme.

He was awarded the Victoria Cross for his bravery when he took charge of three other battalions as well as his own when their commanders were injured.



# Noel Godfrey Chavasse | 1884-1917

Captain Noel Godfrey Chavasse was one of only three people to be awarded the Victoria Cross twice in his lifetime.

In 1916 Chavasse rescued three men who were just 25 yards away from the German firing line. He worked through the night to rescue them even though the Germans shot sniper bullets at him all night long.

A year later in 1917 once again he rescued more soldiers while under enemy fire. He crossed No Mans Land to rescue wounded soldiers even though he was wounded himself.

On August 2<sup>nd</sup> his post was hit by a German shell. Before he died of his injuries he crawled half a mile to get help for other wounded men. He died on August 4<sup>th</sup> 1917.



# Charles Smith Rutherford | 1892-1989

Charles Smith Rutherford was a Canadian soldier who fought in World War 1. He was awarded the Military Medal, the Military Cross and the Victoria Cross.

On the 26<sup>th</sup> of August 1918 Rutherford was leading a group of soldiers through France. At one point he got separated from the group and was on his own when he came across a group of enemy soldiers. He persuaded them that they were surrounded and he got all 45 of them to surrender including two officers.

On the same day he led his group in the capture of another 35 prisoners and their guns.



## Edward 'Mick' Mannock | 1887-1918

Edward 'Mick' Mannock was an Irish soldier who was awarded the Military Cross twice.

In February 1918 Captain Mannock joined the Tiger Squadron. He was a natural leader who deliberately set up kills for new pilots to build their confidence. He downed at least 61 aircraft during his career as a pilot.

His last flight was the 26<sup>th</sup> of July 1918. After attacking a German plane he followed it down but was hit by groundfire. His plane crashed to the ground and he was killed. He was also awarded a Victoria Cross for being one of the greatest fighter pilots of World War 1.





# The Christmas Truce



During the Christmas of 1914, the soldiers along the western front in France stopped fighting and had an unofficial cease fire for Christmas day. Soldiers from each side came out of the trenches and met in 'No Mans Land'. They talked to each other, gave each other gifts, shared food, sang songs and even played a game of soccer.

The truce began when the German soldiers lit candles and started to sing Christmas carols. The British soldiers joined in with the singing and some brave soldiers from both sides walked towards each other.

Some of the songs that they sang were:

O Come All Ye Faithful, The First Noel, Auld Lang Syne, and While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks at Night.

# The Most Memorable Battles of WW1





# Battle of Tannenberg

The Battle of Tannenberg was one of the first major battles of World War I. It took place from August 23 - 30 in 1914 and it was between the Germans and the Russians. The Germans won the battle and proved that they could defeat armies larger than theirs through good tactics.

The Germans used trains to transport their troops instead of marching them in which meant they were not tired and ready for battle. They also got there very quickly.

The Russians used radio transmitters to communicate and the Germans easily intercepted the messages because the Russians didn't encrypt them. This meant that the Germans knew the Russians battle plans in advance.

There were two Russian armies and the commanders of each army did not get on with one another. This meant they didn't work as a team and this was their biggest downfall. Alexander Samsonov (commander of the Second Army) killed himself when he realised they had lost the battle.

# The 1st Battle of the Marne

The Marne is a river near Paris. At the start of WW1, Germany hoped to avoid fighting on two fronts by knocking out France (The Western Front) before turning to Russia in the east.

The First Battle of the Marne was fought between Germany and the allies of France and Britain. As the Germans advanced, their armies became divided and the Allies took advantage of this gap and charged between the two armies splitting the them. Then they attacked from all sides confusing the Germans. After a few days of fighting, the Germans were forced to retreat.

When the German army retreated they dug trenches to protect themselves and this was the beginning of 'Trench Warfare' that continued for all of World War 1.

The battle was considered a major victory, however, for the Allies. By holding off the German army, they had forced Germany to fight the war on two fronts.



# The Battle of the Somme

This battle took place nearly two years after the Battle of the Marne and the allies hoped to break the stalemate that the 'Trench Warfare' had caused.

With over 1 million casualties the Battle of the Somme was one of the bloodiest in human history. The Allies lost around 89,000 men per mile of territory gained.

The allies plan was to bomb the German front line continuously for a week before moving in but the Germans found out about the plan so they moved their troops back and the plan didn't work.

Many British men from the same town were grouped together in the 'Pal's battalions', so when a battalion was wiped out, it often meant that all the men from a town in Britain were killed.

The first tanks to ever be used in battle were at the Battle of the Somme.

The attack ended in November mostly due to heavy snow in the region.



# The Battle of Verdun

The Battle Of Verdun took place from February 21–December 18, 1916. It was one of the longest and about 300,000 were killed.

The Battle Of The Somme was started by the British to try to help the French who were fighting against the Germans in the battle of Verdun. The French had a huge amount of losses so the British started another battle against Germany's army to ease the pressure on the French troops.

Eventually the Germans gave up on Verdun and left to focus on other parts of the Western front.

The battle started with the Germans bombarding the town of Verdun with heavy machine guns and flame throwers.

Today the Verdun battlefield is a historical park and you can still see the crater holes that were made by the bombs to this day.



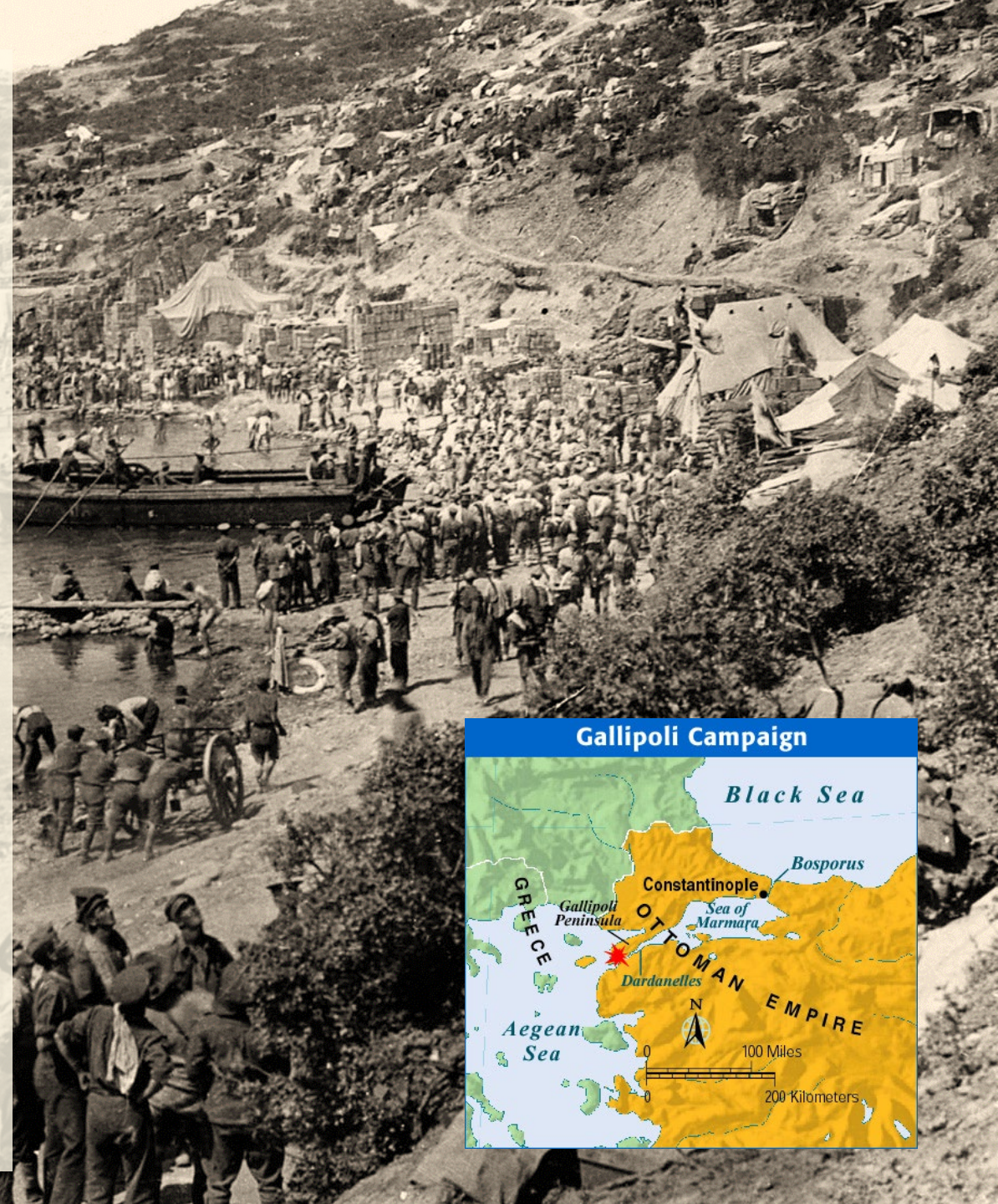
# The Gallipoli Campaign

By 1915 the war on the Western Front was in stalemate and the head of Russia asked for help from the Allies to fight against the Ottoman Empire.

The plan was to capture the Dardanelle Strait which connected the Black Sea and the Aegean Sea and would mean the allies could link up supply routes with Russia and knock the Ottoman Empire out of the way.

The Allies decided to do a naval attack but the Turkish Ottomans had put mines in the water which blew up the ships. Next they tried a land attack with 75,000 men but landed slightly off target and then had to dig trenches for protection. Thousands and thousands more troops were sent but they could not defeat the Turkish Ottoman Empire at Gallipoli. They eventually evacuated in December 1915 after almost a year.

There were about 500,000 casualties during the Gallipoli battle and it was seen as the biggest defeat for the Allies.



A black and white photograph of a field of white flowers, likely poppies, with several bright red poppies in the foreground. The sky is overcast with dark, heavy clouds. The text is overlaid on the top left of the image.

**World War One ended at 11am  
on 11 November, 1918.**

**Many soldiers suffered from shell shock or were disabled. It was difficult to forget about the horrors of the war. Their lives were never the same again.**

**Poppies are worn in remembrance of all the soldiers who fought and died in the war.**