



# FIRST WORLD WAR



The Great War, formally known as the First World War, began in 1914. One week after the declaration of war London attacked Germany on August 4th 1914.

On a wave of a huge and unprecedented enthusiasm many volunteers enlisted in addition to the 80,000 men already serving the British armed forces. Influenced by slogans like "Wake up London!" many Londoners were eager to join the forces by the call of adventure and patriotic feeling.

The first conscription law was passed in January 1916.

31st May 1915 was important for London, on that day Germany raided London for the first time with bombs thrown out of zeppelins or war airplains, like a Gotha. The bloodiest German airraid was on the morning of 13 June 1917. 162 people died, 439 were injured.

But the war did not only have negative influences. The women's status in London increased rapidly in social prestige. Suddenly they were employed to undertake many roles previously carried out only by men.

This war initiated another new situation for London: it was the first time that civilians were allowed to defend themselves with the help of London's war economy, which provided full-time employment. This had the effect that the living standards of the working class rose. London experienced a huge inflow of people and resources. London had a large capacity of manufacturing goods, which were advantageous for the war production.



DESTROYED LONDON



GOTHA



ZEPPELIN

Defending against the aircraft attacks challenged London. For the first time on 2nd September 1916 London managed to defend herself against the Germans.

During the war, around 1917, the mood in London changed. The enthusiasm of the beginning evaporated and fear dominated the entire city. The citizens began to hoard food based on the anxiety that they might run out of it. Almost every London family was affected by death, more than one million enlisted London men died.

In the ensuing year, the end of the war was near, but London was plagued again, this time by diseases. 16,520 victims fell prey to the Spanish flu epidemic that racked the country between June 1918 and May 1919. Armistice was declared on 28 June 1919. The Londoners were overjoyed when they received the news. Although peace was established, the war had left its marks.

How this all changed London...

Long lasting effects of the war on the average citizen's daily life were an increased presence of state authorities, which came e.g. in the form of food rationing, the introduction of identity cards, licensing laws, censorship, wage-freezes, price limits and curfews.

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**WAR DOES NOT  
DETERMINE WHO IS RIGHT  
ONLY WHO IS LEFT.  
-BERTRAND RUSSELL**

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