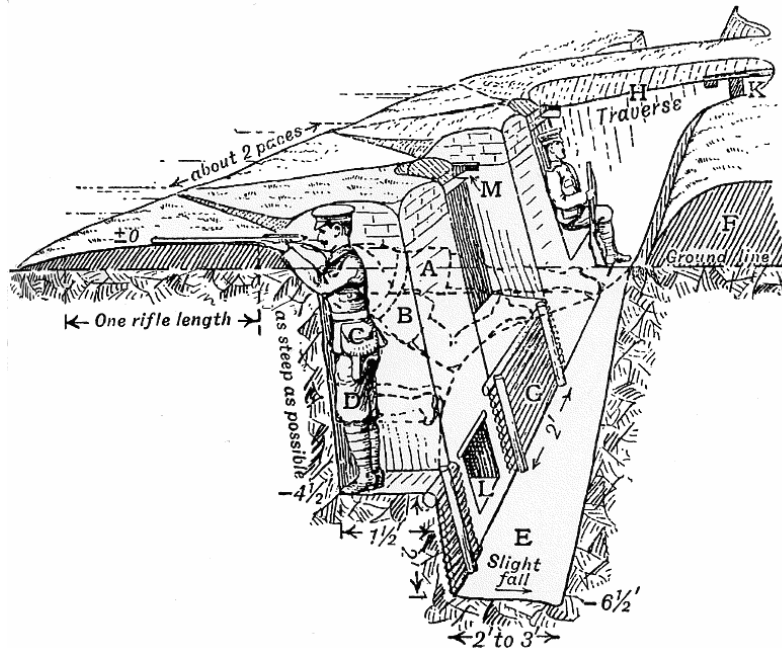


## Significance of the Shape of the Trench



### Significance of the shape of the trenches:

The way the trench is built was very important in WW1; a tiny inaccuracy in the structure of the trench could lead to someone's death. The trenches were usually dug in a straight line. Elsewise, if the enemy managed to get into the trench, they could shoot straight along the line. If the trenches were dug in a straight line, any enemy that gained access at any point of the trench would have the whole trench under their control. However, if the trench was zigzag, even if the enemy managed to get in the trench, they could only control part of it. There would still be soldiers on defense (they have walls to hide behind). Another very important reason for the trench being zigzag is that if a bomb or shell landed in the trench, the blast could not travel far.

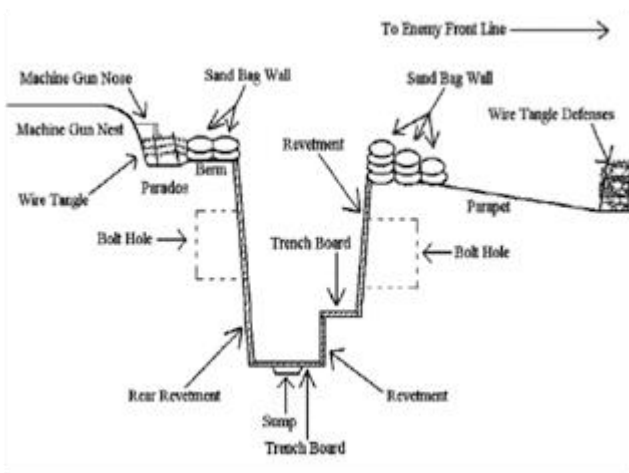
During WW1 it was not easy to deal with the dead bodies, there were thousands of them. Most of the deaths happened in no man's land, however some occurred in the trenches. If there was a battle going on, the dead were usually left lying around in the trenches until someone was free to deal with them, but if a battle was not going on most of the dead soldiers were buried almost exactly where they fell in shallow graves. That is why when new trenches or dugouts were needed, lots of bodies would be found just below the surface!

### Details about the trench:

- The trenches in WW1 were based on a standard trench system; it was three parallel lines, interconnected by communication trenches. These communication trenches were of critical importance; they connected all the trenches together, so if the enemy managed to get control over it, they got control over three lines of trenches. The trench was about seven feet deep and six feet wide.
- The front of the trench is the [parapet](#). The top part of the trench and the rear side of the trench was usually made out of Sandbags.
- [Sandbags](#) help stop bullets and shell fragments.
- Because the trench was very deep, it was impossible to see over the top, so they used something known as a [fire-step](#), the soldiers stood on it and fired at the enemy.
- [Duckboards](#) were placed at the bottom of the trenches, it stopped humidity and moist.
- A very important part of the trench is the dugout. The [Dugouts](#) are very important because artillery strikes can last for days, the only safe place for the soldiers are the dugouts. The British artillery strikes on the Germans lasted for seven days, thanks to the dugouts; only two German soldiers were injured. Dugouts were also made to give the soldiers cover from the weather.
- Artillery bases were usually 5-10 kilometer behind the trenches. The planes help the artillery hit their target by telling them to aim slightly left or slightly right etc.....
- Barbed wire and machine gun posts were placed in front of the front-line trenches to stop any intruder. Machine guns and barbed wire were very beneficial in the trench warfare; they were the main sources of defense.
- Soldiers used something called loopholes, loopholes allowed soldiers to see what was going on in the battlefield without exposing their heads.

Shooting from the trench was pretty accurate; snipers, machine guns, and rifles did the job. Snipers were very accurate, they could be fired from far distances but still hit minute targets. The best thing about snipers is that the shooter can shoot and kill enemies but still be safe. Machine guns were not as accurate in far distance, but very handy in close distances. Soldiers using the machine guns were just as safe; they were surrounded by sandbags. Sandbags absorbed any bullet or shell passing by. However rifles were the least accurate, they were hard to reload and didn't always hit the target; it was harder to aim with.

## Trench Warfare





Sources:-

1. In the footsteps Bookshelf. "Life in the Trenches" Accessed October 10, 2012. <http://inthefootsteps.org.uk/Articles/1914-18GreatWar/LifeInTheTrenches.htm>