A Century Later:
Remembering World War I

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The Great War

No. 44

Renault Light Tank

The US military arrived in France without tanks, thereby relying on France's premier light tank, the Renault FT. The FT carried a two-man crew and featured a mounted 8mm Hotchkiss machine gun on a fully rotating turret. Shown is an FT in US service during the 1918 St. Mihiel Offensive, the first independent American offensive of the war.

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The Great War

No. 43

Women's Radio Corps

The Women's Radio Corps was established under the Army Signal Service and trained women in wireless telegraphy. Women not only served as wireless operators, but also as instructors of radio classes for men, inspectors of radio equipment, and researchers in the Corps' research and development offices. The Army Signal Service was the only service that permitted women to wear uniforms resembling those of men (skirts replaced trousers). Shown is Miss Elizabeth Baker (left) with two unidentified colleagues and an unidentified driver circa 1918.

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The Great War

No. 46

Bombardment

The curtain of moral responsibility that once dictated the fighting of battles to areas outside of villages and towns, sparing destruction and innocent lives, had closed by WWI. Every community was fair game in the push towards victory. Shown is an aerial view of the ruins of Vaux, France, after the July 12–15, 1918 battle, that shows the severity of the destruction. Vaux was rebuilt, unlike other destroyed villages that had "died for France"—they were preserved and remain uninhabited to this day.

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The Great War

No. 45

Americans at Verdun

Those who lived and fought in the trenches during WWI not only endured the enemy's weapons of war—bombs, bullets, tanks, flamethrowers, grenades and poisonous gas—but also the unforgiving cold and incessant dampness. The deplorable living conditions bred diseases such as dysentery, typhus, cholera, and fungal conditions, often resulting in trench mouth and foot. Thousands on both sides perished. Shown are American soldiers looking out towards a valley near Verdun, France, from their vantage point on a hilltop trench in 1918.

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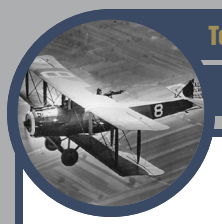

Technology

No. 11

1st Aero Squadron

The 1st Aero Squadron is the oldest (1913) US military air unit, and first to see combat. The 1st Aero Squadron's operations during WWI consisted of close-range daylight reconnaissance and twilight artillery spotting. Emissions control and plane guard escorts characterized long-range reconnaissance. Other missions included artillery adjustment and infantry contact patrols. Leveraging intelligence collected in flight to adjust artillery fires on the ground was difficult due to poor air-to-ground communications at the time. Shown is a Salmson 2 A2 aircraft—a mainstay of French and United States observation flights.

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Warrior

No. 5

Sergeant Major Daniel Daly

By 1917, Sergeant Major Daly was a seasoned NCO with the American Expeditionary Forces' Marines 6th Regiment, 73rd Machine Gun Company. After Russia's defeat in 1918, Germany launched multiple offensives against France. The Third offensive began in May. Outgunned and pinned down under a heavy artillery barrage, Daly called a frontal attack, yelling, "Come on, you sons of sea witches! Do you want to live forever?" Daly single handedly destroyed a machine gun nest. The AEF halted the Germans at Chateau Thierry/Belleau Wood.

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