

Trench Art

In the trenches of WW1, a lot of the time was spent waiting around for orders. To fill times, soldiers would make their own entertainment. They played board games, cards, did sports like wrestling, but they also created their own art with whatever was laying around.

A favourite pastime was carving things they found in the trenches. All soldiers carried a knife so it was easy to make designs in whatever was laying around. This might be bits of wood, bones from the meals they ate and even dead bullet casings!

If you didn't have a handy shell casing, you might want to paint something instead. Of course paper was hard to come by in the trenches, so one soldier painted a picture of a dog on a cracker!

WW1 crackers were extremely hard, and you couldn't eat them without dipping them in something yummy first. This was so that they would last a long time in the trenches without going bad. To eat them the soldiers would soak them in soup or gravy with their meals.

They must have been pretty bad, because this soldier obviously thought of a better use for his!

Your Task

Using a cracker or other hard biscuit, carefully paint a small picture of something related to WW1.



Above: A Cracker painted by a bored soldier in the trenches. "Terrier" was a nickname for the soldiers, who spent much of their time digging in the earth like a terrier dog. "Snap" was slang for food

Left: A bullet casing carved by a British soldier