

Website Spotlight



World War I Online at the British Library *Philip Gust**

A website hosted by the British Library provides a wealth of articles, photographs, and videos about World War I that are also useful as costuming resources.

The British Library is leading the UK's contribution to a pan-European commemoration of World War I, [Europeana 1914-1918](#). The project has made hundreds of thousands of newly digitized material available online for free, relating to stories and events of the war.

The British Library's [World War One](#) website offers curated access to nearly 500 of these items, plus newly commissioned articles from leading experts, short films, interviews with academics and authors, and a dedicated teachers' area. The website is a starting point for discovering how WWI affected people on different sides of the conflict, and for studying historical artifacts including the clothing worn by both military and civilians during the war.

The main page of the website includes a navigation bar that organizes the resources into categories, including Themes, Articles, Collection Items, Videos, and Teaching

World War One

Home Themes Articles Collection items Videos Teaching resources

Resources. It also presents visual navigation aids that highlight resources in some of the categories. These navigation aids are attractive and make it easy to preview the most popular resources in each the categories.

The main page and all of the other pages on the site also include a search function for quickly locating content on the website by keywords or textual context.

Over 50 articles about World War One, written by leading experts

World War One propaganda
Professor Ji Fox provides fascinating insights into propaganda techniques of World War One

Read more

Reframing First World War poetry
Dr Santanu Das considers how the examination of war poetry has changed and looks beyond typical British trench lyrics to explore the variety of poetic responses.

Read more

The debate on the origins of World War One
Beginning with the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, Dr Anika Montbauer explores the opposing debates about the origins of World War One. Is it possible for historians to arrive at a consensus?

Read more

Abhorrence propaganda
Abhorrence propaganda focused on the most violent acts committed by the German and Austro-Hungarian armies, emphasizing their barbarity and providing justification for the conflict. Professor Ji Fox describes the forms that such propaganda took in the early years of the war.

Read more

Visual navigation aid for articles on WWI

Themes

The Themes category organizes the content into topic of interest, presented as a visual navigation aid with photos and drawings that illustrate what is covered. The photos on this page include many types of military and civilian clothing, and many of the themes provide material that is useful for historical costume research of the period.



Life as a soldier

What was life like for the millions of professional, conscripted or recruited soldiers?

Read more



Race, empire and colonial troops

Over four million non-white men served in WWI. Explore more about their lives and responsibilities.

Read more



Propaganda

How was propaganda used to inspire patriotism, dehumanise the enemy and change opinions?

Read more



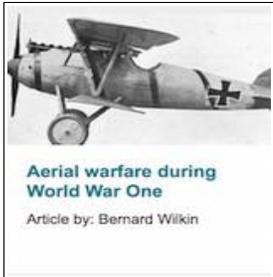
Civilians

What was life like for civilians, women, children and those displaced by the fighting?

Read more

Articles

The Articles category provides access to 61 articles about different aspects of the war. This page includes the familiar visual navigation aide to articles. Many of these articles include photos and discussion about their subject that will be useful for historical costuming research.



Examples of navigation aids for articles category.

Users can sort the articles by title or relevance and view them in either a grid or list view. The left area of the page presents the articles by *facets*, such as “Life as a Soldier,” which has 12 articles, and by contributor. The page also provides a search function for locating content.



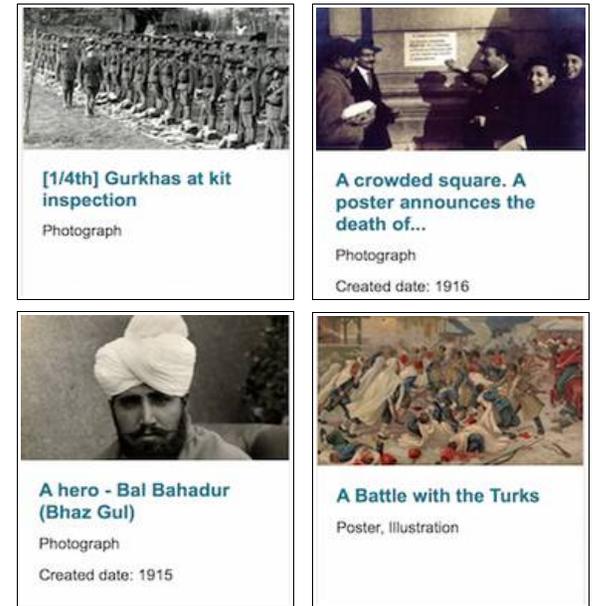
Individual articles provide a discussion of the topic by a noted scholar in the field, and photo galleries that illustrate the topic. They also provide links to related articles and other resources..



Articles include photos and links to related articles.

Collection Items

The Collection Items category provides access to 491 images in the collection, many of them showing military and civilian clothing that will be useful references. The page also includes facets finding aid for themes, creator, date, format, and language, and a search function.



Examples of navigation aids for photos.

Individual image pages include a description of the photo and subject, the collection that it is part of, and useful metadata about the photo.



Photos include full description and metadata.

Videos

The Videos category currently has four videos where a curator discusses a particular topic and shows related examples from the collection. In addition to “World War One propaganda,” the include “World War One poetry,” “World War One atrocity propaganda,” and “Wilfred Owen, 'Dulce et Decorum Est'.”



Video navigation aid.

The videos include transcripts of the discussion, and links to related videos, and related articles. There are no facets available in this category.

Videos include transcripts and links to relate videos

Teaching Resources

The 40 teaching resources are grouped by topic, and geared towards particular age or grade levels (e.g. Ages 11 to 14, Ages 14 to 16, Ages 16 to 18). Although not all the resources are useful directly as costuming references, the background they provide can be useful as information that helps re-enactors in portraying their characters, or for students to understand the life and times as part of a history curriculum that incorporates costuming and role-play.

Some of the topics available include “Daily life in the trenches,” “Daily life on the home front,” “India and World War One,” and “Aerial warfare.” There are facets for age, subject, and themes.

- Daily life in the trenches**
Language: English
Curriculum: UK
Levels: Ages 11 to 14, Ages 14 to 16, Ages 16 to 18
Subject: History
In this activity students will use primary source material to gain
- Daily life on the Home Front**
Language: English
Curriculum: UK
Levels: Ages 11 to 14, Ages 14 to 16, Ages 16 to 18
Subject: History
In this activity, students will
- India and World War One**
Language: English
Curriculum: UK
Levels: Ages 11 to 14, Ages 14 to 16, Ages 16 to 18
Subject: History
The aim of this lesson is to
- Aerial warfare**
Language: English
Curriculum: UK
Levels: Ages 11 to 14, Ages 14 to 16, Ages 16 to 18
Subject: History
This activity will introduce

Examples of teaching resources navigation aids.

Individual teaching resources are described in more detail on their landing pages, and provide a downloadable curriculum pack in PDF format. There are no facets available in this category.

Teaching resources include PDF curriculum packs.

Summary

The British Library’s [World War One](#) website is a valuable resource for costumers because it makes historical articles, photos, images, videos, and teaching resources available online. Many of them are newly-digitized and have never been available before to a users world-wide. The website has a pleasant graphical presentation, and helps users find information in a number of ways, including by categories, navigation aids, facets, and keyword search. Although not every resource is useful for costumers, there are enough that it is worth bookmarking and referring to when costuming in the time period around World War I.

Philip Gust enjoys sci-fi and fantasy costuming, and has particular interests in props, special effects, and prosthetic makeup. He also costumes in historical periods, including Regency, Victorian, and early 20th C.