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**Environment Study:**

# British sector of the Western Front 1914-18

Injuries, treatments and the trenches

# Introduction to the Environment Study:

- This part of your exam is worth **10%** (It is part A of paper 1)
- It is the newest part of GCSE History
- **You will learn:**
  - How to use sources and ask appropriate questions in your enquiry into medicine in the trenches
  - Consider the terrain of trench warfare and how that impacted on treatment
  - You will link your knowledge of 20<sup>th</sup> Century medicine to treatment of the soldiers
  - The types of injuries and illnesses that were experienced by soldiers in the trenches
  - The developments in surgery in treating the soldiers in the trenches



# Sources and the exam: The technical stuff

There are 3 questions to answer, Q1 and Q2a & b:

Q1: Describe 2 features of... [4 marks]

- 5 mins on this question MAX
- Fill the lines they give you in the paper
- 2 points with some extra information

## Eg: Describe two features of Casualty Clearing Stations

**Answer 1:** Casualty Clearing Stations were **as close as possible to the frontline.** The wounded were divided into three groups in the Casualty Clearing Stations.

**Marks?** **2** Reason: It is an average answer because there are 2 features given, but there is no supporting information.

**Answer 2:** Casualty Clearing Stations needed to **be close enough the frontline** to be able to deal quickly with the wounded, but far enough away to have some protection from shelling. A triage system was used to divide the wounded into groups in the clearing stations. Those who were not likely to survive would only be made comfortable, but not treated.

**Marks?** **4** Reason: It is a strong answer as it gives 2 clear features of Casualty Clearing Stations and has specific extra detail to make the descriptions more precise.

# Language of 'Source work'

## PROVENANCE:

This is what we look at to decide the utility (usefulness) of a source

Typical questions to be thinking about straight away:

- What is its purpose? (Why was it made, to make a point, attack something/one etc)
- What is the standpoint / viewpoint of the author or artist?
- Is it part of the action, or reflecting on the action?

## N.O.P.:

Nature, Origin and Purpose – This helps us break the source down to evaluate what might make it useful / less useful

- Nature - What is the source? Photograph, diary, newspaper, government leaflet etc...
- Origin - When was it made? At the time? Years later? Where? Who made it? Nurse? Soldier?
- Purpose – Why was it made?

**Make a list of types sources (NATURE): Rank them in order of most useful to least, then say why!**

**Note: Just because it was written years later, doesn't mean that it is not useful either? Historians could have researched carefully comparing lots of sources and of course there is lots of hindsight!**

## **Provenance:**

When we read something about the problems that faced the medical services during the Battle of the Somme ...

**Would it be more useful if it was – rank this list in order of most useful 5 – 1 least useful:**

- **By someone who had fought in the battle?**
- **General Haig commenting from behind the lines**
- **A surgeon following the battle**
- **A historian's book years in 1998**
- **A soldiers diary in 1987**

**Just because it was written at the time does not mean it is true.**

**Eg: A nurse driving an ambulance might have written to her parents back home a couple of days after the events she's describing. She would likely not tell them in detail the deaths she saw.**

**So, the purpose of her letter then....:**

**She might have just been keeping in contact with her family, rather than to tell the whole truth about what she is doing? If she was writing to the chief surgeon though...?**



**BE  
CAREFUL  
!**

# The standpoint of the author / artist:

Does the person have a particular point of view?

**Think of some different points of view any author / artist might have**

If you are reading a description of the medical treatments received by soldiers during the Battle of the Somme, it might be useful to know whether it was written by an opponent of the government or a supporter.

- **What might someone attacking General Haig's 'Over the Top' tactic say?**
- **What might a supporter of General Haig say about his 'Over the Top' tactic?**

**Another example, maybe attacking Government Propaganda:**

*"Government propaganda was deliberately created to change people's views. It might be exaggerated, it might leave things out (like the death rates), or it might just not be true"*

**Should we avoid using propaganda sources then?**

**NO: They show us a great deal of what Gov't  
though or wanted us to know at the time**

# Then or After?

**What is the difference between commentary of a football match and the account of the same game 20 years later in a players autobiography? Which is more useful?**

## **What about:**

The diary of a losing fan written the same day of the game?

The diary of a losing fan written years later?

The diary of the winning manager?

The referees report of the game

Hopefully you can see, that this 'source' business has many layers to it.

You just need to be able to **THINK** outside the box, really question things that you're reading or looking at, and remember to say how those ideas affect usefulness etc...

## **Actually using a source as evidence:**

A source can only be usefully used as evidence when there is a specific question or enquiry attached to it

# Using a source as evidence

**A source can only be usefully used as evidence when there is a specific question or enquiry attached to it:**

## Source B

From Pat Beauchamp's autobiography, *Fanny Goes to War*, published in 1919. Beauchamp first worked as a nurse, bringing in the wounded from the trenches, and from 1916 as an ambulance driver. Here she is describing driving casualties to the Base Hospitals.

The battle of the Somme was in progress. Besides barges and day trains, three ambulance trains arrived each week. The whole Convoy turned out for this; and one by one the twenty-five odd cars would set off, keeping an equal distance apart, forming an imposing looking column down from the camp, across the bridge and through the town to the railway siding... Arrived at the big railway siding, we all formed up into a straight line to await the train... The ambulances were then reversed right up to the doors, and the stretcher bearers soon filled them up with four lying cases [wounded who could not walk]... Those journeys back were perfect nightmares. Try as one would, it was impossible not to bump a certain amount over those appalling roads full of holes and cobbles. It was pathetic when a voice from the interior could be heard asking, "Is it much farther, Sister?" and knowing how far it was, my heart ached for them. After all they had been through, one felt they should be spared every extra bit of pain that was possible. When I in my turn was in an ambulance, I knew just what it felt like. Sometimes the cases were so bad we feared they would not even last the journey, and there we were all alone, and not able to hurry to hospital owing to the other three on board.

**Source B here, its neither useful or not useful at the moment**

**Lets add a question / enquiry:**

**How useful is Source B in learning about the role of ambulance drivers driving the wounded to base hospitals?**

**Or:**

**How useful is Source B in learning about the the conditions in the casualty clearing stations?**

**Read this source and then write a brief sentence saying whether you think it is useful or not for answering each question / enquiry.**

# Judging the source

1) Your job is to then, using this NOP evaluation, judge how useful the source is - How does the NOP make it useful & not useful?

## Source C

Photograph of a wounded British soldier being carried on a stretcher by German prisoners of war, 15 September 1916. This followed a battle that was part of the Somme campaign.



Eg: **"We don't know if Source C was taken as propaganda to reassure people that things were going well. Could it have been staged?"**

2) Then you move onto the CONTENT – What can you learn from the source that is relevant? What can you infer from it? Does it tell you anything new, adding to your own knowledge?

Eg: **"Source C clearly shows a soldier being carried on a stretcher, I know this is common as a way of moving soldiers off the battlefield for treatment..."**

**Remember to think about context – looking at the date of the event, what else was going on around that time?**

# Study Source C:

## Source C

Photograph of a wounded British soldier being carried on a stretcher by German prisoners of war, 15 September 1916. This followed a battle that was part of the Somme campaign.



- **Make a list of criteria you could use to judge its usefulness**

# Technique of this Q is actually quite easy, it just takes practice.

## Q2a

**Study sources A and B: How useful are Sources A and B for an enquiry into the...? – problems faced by medical services during battles on the Western Front?**

**Job 1:** Consider the content of the source

- What information does it have that is useful or that you know is true? Or false even! What **inferences** can you make from the content?
- Annotate the sources before starting and make a **JUDGEMENT** about how useful they are to the specific Q in the opening sentence (both sources)

**Job 2: PROVENANCE:** Consider strengths and weaknesses of the source

- **NATURE:** What type of source is it? - How does that affect its utility (usefulness)
- **ORIGIN:** Who produced it? Will they be a one-sided view, were they there?
- **PURPOSE:** Why was it produced? How might this affect the **reliability** of the source?

**Job 3: CAT TEST** Use your **OWN KNOWLEDGE** of the historical context to **EVALUATE** the source

- How **comprehensive** is the source? Does it have limitations or missing information?
- How **accurate** is the source? Does it match what you know about the topic?
- How **typical** is the source? Did the events described happen regularly or are they unusual or rare? What happened most of the time?

**When you have done these 3 jobs on both the sources, you can write your answer.**

**Remember to refer to the question regularly... Source A is useful toin this enquiry because...**



**CAT TEST**

For this introduction, you might struggle with Job 3, but in real life, after learning it, you can do this better

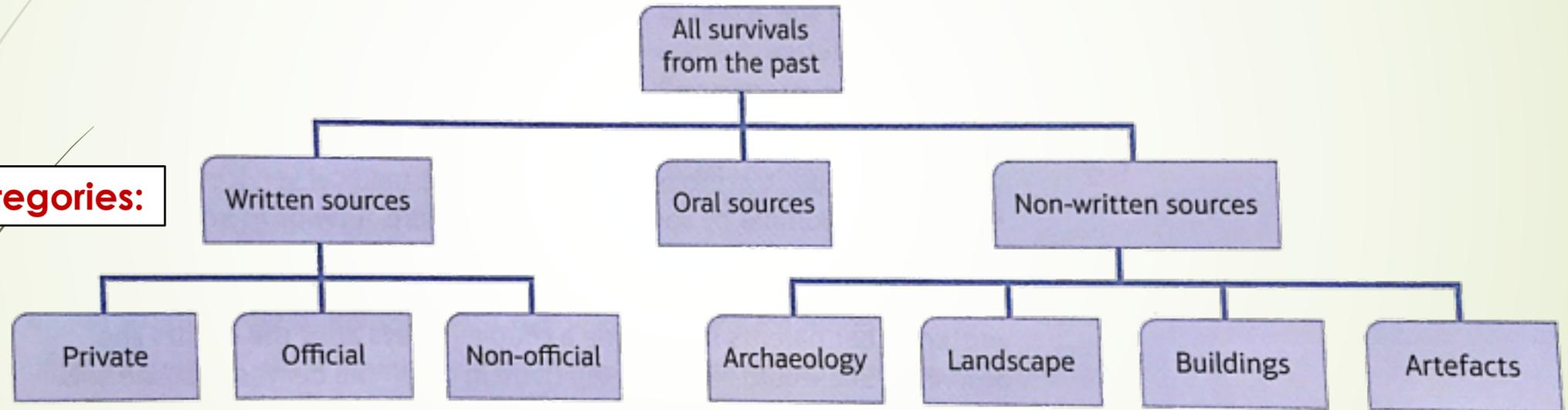
# Following up a source:

Where possible, historians try to use as many different types of sources as they can.

This is because they all have different strengths and weaknesses that can help in their enquiry.

**Categories:**

**Examples:**



**Your Life:**

Using this chart, make a list of sources you could use to study your own life. Try to have at least 1 example from each category.

Explain why each example would be useful

# The newest question type to GCSE

## Q2b

### Following up a source to find out more

- 5 mins on this question MAX
- Fill the lines they give you in the paper, 1 or 2 sentences for each section

This question is really down to you, you come up with your own questions to ask – this is PROPER HISTORY

(b) Study Source B.

How could you follow up Source B to find out more about the problems involved in performing operations on the Western Front?

In your answer, you must give the question you would ask and the type of source you could use.

Complete the table below.

(4)

Detail in Source B that I would follow up:

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Question I would ask:

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What type of source I could use:

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How this might help answer my question:

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Detail in Source A that I would follow up: **From the source**

*After doing well for three days a massive gas infection set in.*

Question I would ask:

*How effective were the different types of treatments for dealing with infections like gas gangrene?*

What type of source I could use:

*Army medical records with statistical data on the survival rates of men who had different treatments for gas gangrene such as irrigation, debridement and amputation.*

How this might help answer my question:

*It would help to see if one of the treatments that was used on the Western Front was more effective than the others.*

Different types of sources

National records

- National army records for individual soldiers
- National newspaper reports
- Government reports on aspects of the war
- Medical articles by doctors and nurses who took part in the war

Local records

- Personal accounts of medical treatments by soldiers, doctors, nurses or others who were involved
- Photographs
- Hospital records
- Army statistics

# WWI

## Topics for your environment study:

Context of Medicine in 20<sup>th</sup> Century (will link with main medicine course):

- Infection and move towards aseptic surgery
- X-Rays
- Blood – storage and transfusion

Conditions / injuries requiring medical treatment:

- Trench Foot, Fever, Shellshock
- Shrapnel wounds
- Gas attacks

Significance of the western Front for experiments in surgery and medicine:

- New techniques for treating wounds / infection
- The Thomas Splint
- Mobile X-Ray units
- Brain & Plastic Surgery

Context of the British sector of the Western Front:

- Flanders & Northern France
- The trench system / set up
- 4 key areas – The Somme, Ypres, Arras & Cambrai
- Problems of transport and communication

The work of the RAMC and FANY:

- Chain of evacuation
- Casualty Clearing Stations, Base Hospitals, underground hospitals





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# Resources to help us in this unit

WW1: The Medical Front [www.vlib.us/medical/](http://www.vlib.us/medical/)

BBC: How did WW1 change the way we treat war injuries today? [www.bbc.co.uk/guides/zs3wpv4](http://www.bbc.co.uk/guides/zs3wpv4)

BBC: World War One: Medicine [www.bbc.co.uk/schools/0/ww1/25403864](http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/0/ww1/25403864)

Imperial War Museum: Western Front <http://www.iwm.org.uk/learning/resources/the-western-front>

Imperial War Museum: WWI <http://www.iwm.org.uk/history/first-world-war>

TV Drama: **The Crimson Field** (Several Episodes) – **EXCELLENT CONTEXT TO TRENCHES & CARE**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nknsW-w1wMs> Episode 1

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6sMuhoCBbUs> Episode 2

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6EJDEILgblw> Episode 3

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=glj0H1g15aq> Episode 4

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2geuzk4WhCs> Episode 5

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WQ8ETPME7Lw> Episode 6

TV Drama: **Anzac Girls** (Several Episodes) –  
**EXCELLENT CONTEXT TO TRENCHES & CARE**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vHJeto0ObxI> Episode 1  
(Following episodes in 'Up Next' Section)

**If you find something useful, let us know.**