

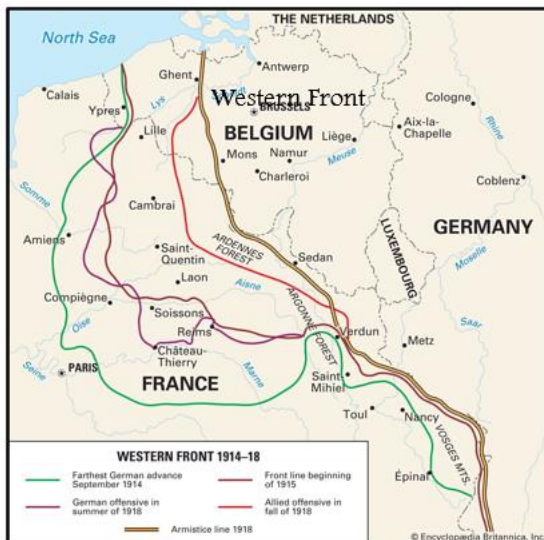
THE GREAT WAR: 1914 ~ 1918

The Great War raged in Europe for almost three years before the United States became involved in April of 1917. All five of Jennie's boys enlisted in the army, but only three went overseas: Joe, Harry and Roy.

The war finally ended after a massive conflict on the Western Front called the Meuse-Argonne Offensive, which remains the deadliest battle in US Army history with over 350,000 casualties. It lasted from September 26 until November 11, 1918, when the Armistice was finally signed.



Candid photos of Joseph and Harry. Military photos of soldiers for identification purposes would not become a standard practice until WWII. Pictures like this were taken by family or other enlisted men at basic training camp before men were deployed overseas. There is no known boot camp photo of Roy.



Patriotic posters that inspired enlistment in the U.S. in WWI

Why was it called “The Great War?”

Europe had exploded in 1914 and countries were forced to fight against each other because of political and economical alliances formed decades earlier. Colonial era occupancy had compelled parts of Asia and Africa to join the fight. On continents far away from the action, Canada and Australia, normally neutral countries, fought because of their alliance with England.

In 1917 the United States was only 141 years old, and had only seen domestic battles, with Civil War veterans still telling tales of glory. The country was sheltered geographically, an ocean away from the fighting in Europe. There was no threat of invasion, and America took its peaceful borders for granted. When the U.S. finally joined the first global conflict on the planet, it felt as if the world was literally coming to an end.

Before world wars were numbered, the worldwide catastrophe that erupted in 1914 was simply called what it was... The Great War.



“Over There” by George M. Cohan



Harry Tidd in full infantry gear at boot camp.