

World War One Kiffen Rockwell and the Lafayette Escadrille Introduction

World War I was a military conflict centered on Europe that began in the summer of 1914. The fighting ended in late 1918. This conflict involved all of the world's great powers, assembled in two opposing alliances: the Allies (centred around the Triple Entente) and the Central Powers. More than 70 million military personnel, including 60 million Europeans, were mobilized in one of the largest wars in history.

More than 9 million combatants were killed, due largely to great technological advances in firepower without corresponding ones in mobility. It was the second deadliest conflict in history. The war is also known as the First World War, the Great War, the War To End All Wars or the World War (prior to the outbreak of World War II).

The assassination on 28 June 1914 of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria, the heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary, is seen as the immediate trigger of the war. Long-term causes, such as imperialistic foreign policies of the great powers of Europe, such as the German Empire, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the Ottoman Empire, the Russian Empire, the British Empire, France, and Italy, played a major role. Ferdinand's assassination by a Yugoslav nationalist resulted in a Habsburg ultimatum against the Kingdom of Serbia. Several alliances formed over the past decades were invoked, so within weeks the major powers were at war; as all had colonies, the conflict soon spread around the world.

Our program at Smith McDowell House centers on the use of aircraft in warfare, most specifically, the Lafayette Escadrille and member Kiffen Rockwell, who was an Asheville citizen.

The **Lafayette Escadrille** (from the French *Escadrille de Lafayette*), was a squadron of the French Air Service, the *Aéronautique militaire*, during World War I composed largely of American volunteer pilots flying fighters.



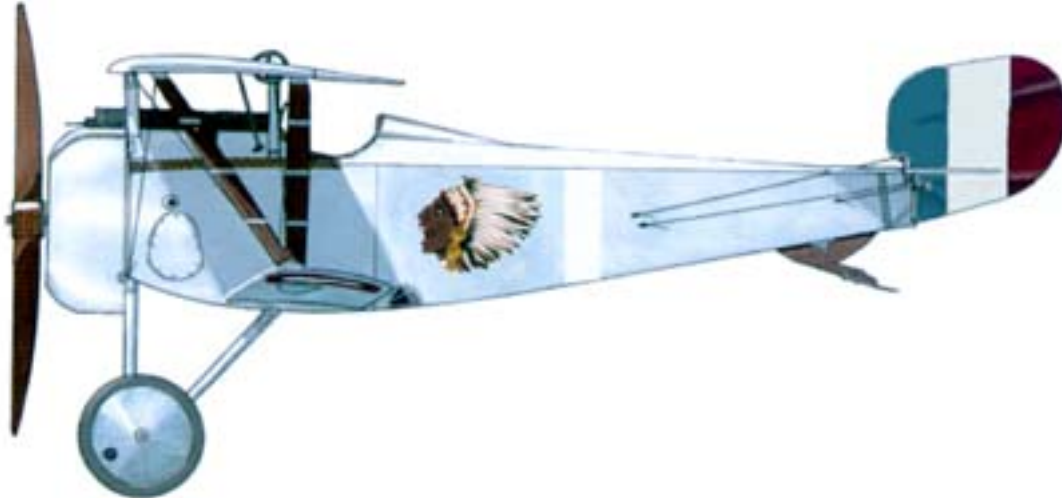
The squadron was formed in April 1916 as the *Escadrille américaine* (number 124) in Luxeuil prior to U.S. entry into the war. Dr. Edmund L. Gros, director of the American Ambulance Service, and Norman Prince, an American expatriate already flying for France, led the efforts to persuade the French government of the value of a volunteer American air unit fighting for France. The aim was to have their efforts recognized by the American public and thus, it was hoped, the resulting publicity would rouse interest in abandoning neutrality and joining the fight. Not all American pilots were in this squadron; other American pilots fought for France as part of the Lafayette Flying Corps.

The squadron was quickly moved to Bar-le-Duc, closer to the front. A German objection filed with the U.S. government, over the actions of a supposed neutral nation, led to the name change in December. The original name implied that the U.S. was allied to France when it was in fact neutral.

Their fighter aircraft, mechanics, and the uniforms were French, as was the commander, Captain Georges Thenault. Five French pilots were also on the roster, serving at various times. Raoul Lufbery, a French-born American citizen, became the

squadron's first, and ultimately their highest scoring flying ace with 16 confirmed victories before his squadron was transferred to the US Air Services.

The first major action seen by the squadron was at the Battle of Verdun, being posted to the front in May 1916 until September 1916, when the unit moved to 7 Army area at Luxeuil. The squadron, flying the Nieuport scout, suffered heavy losses, but its core group of 38 was rapidly replenished by other Americans arriving from overseas. So many volunteered that the Lafayette Flying Corps was formed, many Americans thereafter serving with other French air units. Altogether, 265 American volunteers served in the Corps.



On 8 February 1918, the squadron was transferred to the US Army Air Service as the 103rd Aero Squadron. For a brief period it retained its French aircraft and mechanics. Most of its veteran members were set to work training newly-arrived American pilots. The 103d PS claimed a further 49 kills up until November 1918.

Pre Visit Lesson
World War One

Before America enters the war...

Goal:

To introduce students to World War I before America enters the war in preparation for field trip or Outreach program from Smith McDowell House Museum.

Objective:

The students will analyze one of four essays about the early years of World War I and share that information with the class.

Lesson:

1. Ask students some of the following questions:
 - a. When did World War One start?
 - b. When did America declare War?
2. After discussion, have students group into 4 heterogeneous groups.
3. Give each group a copy or copies of one of the following essays.
 - a. In their groups, have them read their selection aloud to their group.
 - b. Each group should present a skit or presentation that illustrates the information in their essay.

Essay 1
Assassination of Archduke Ferdinand, 1914

Two bullets fired on a Sarajevo street on a sunny June morning in 1914 set in motion a series of events that shaped the world we live in today. World War One, World War Two, the Cold War and its conclusion all trace their origins to the gunshots that interrupted that summer day.

The victims, Archduke Franz Ferdinand - heir to the throne of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and his wife Sophie, were in the Bosnian city in conjunction with Austrian troop exercises nearby. The couple was returning from an official visit to City Hall. The assassin, 19-year-old Gavrilo Princip burned with the fire of Slavic nationalism. He envisioned the death of the Archduke as the key that would unlock the shackles binding his people to the Austro-Hungarian Empire.



Berliners cheer a regiment of Lancers headed for the Front. August 1914

A third party, Serbia, figured prominently in the plot. Independent Serbia provided the guns, ammunition and training that made the assassination possible.

The Balkan Region of Europe entered the twentieth century much as she left it: a caldron of seething political intrigue needing only the slightest increase of heat to boil over into open conflict. The shots that day in Sarajevo pushed the caldron to the boiling point and beyond.

A Royal Murder

Seven conspirators joined the crowd lining the Archduke's route to City Hall. Each took a different position, ready to attack the royal car if the opportunity presented itself. The six-car procession approached one conspirator, Gabrinovic (or Cabrinovic), who threw his bomb only to see it bounce off the Archduke's car and explode near the following car. Unhurt, the Archduke and his wife sped to the reception at City Hall. The ceremonies finished, the Royal procession amazingly retraced its steps bringing the Archduke into the range of the leader of the conspiracy, Gavrilo Princip. More amazingly, the royal car stopped right in front of Princip providing him the opportunity to fire two shots. Both bullets hit home.

Borijove Jevtic, one of the conspirators gave this eyewitness account:

"When Francis Ferdinand and his retinue drove from the station they were allowed to pass the first two conspirators. The motor cars were driving too fast to make an attempt feasible and in the crowd were many Serbians; throwing a grenade would have killed many innocent people.

When the car passed Gabrinovic, the compositor, he threw his grenade. It hit the side of the car, but Francis Ferdinand with presence of mind threw himself back and was uninjured. Several officers riding in his attendance were injured.

The cars sped to the Town Hall and the rest of the conspirators did not interfere with them. After the reception in the Town Hall General Potiorek, the Austrian Commander, pleaded with Francis Ferdinand to leave the city, as it was seething with rebellion. The Archduke was persuaded to drive the shortest way out of the city and to go quickly.

The road to the maneuvers was shaped like the letter V, making a sharp turn at the bridge over the River Nilgacka [Miljacka]. Francis Ferdinand's car could go fast enough until it reached this spot but here it was forced to slow down for the turn. Here Princip had taken his stand.



As the car came abreast he stepped forward from the curb, drew his automatic pistol from his coat and fired two shots. The first struck the wife of the Archduke, the Archduchess Sofia, in the abdomen. She was an expectant mother. She died instantly.

Members of the crowd try to attack Princip after his capture

The second bullet struck the Archduke close to the heart.

He uttered only one word, 'Sofia' -- a call to his stricken wife. Then his head fell back and he collapsed. He died almost instantly.

The officers seized Princip. They beat him over the head with the flat of their swords. They knocked him down, they kicked him, scraped the skin from his neck with the edges of their swords, tortured him, all but killed him."

Another Perspective

Count Franz von Harrach rode on the running board of the royal car serving as a bodyguard for the Archduke. His account begins immediately after Princip fires his two shots:



The Archduke and his wife leave City Hall. Count Harrach rides the running board

"As the car quickly reversed, a thin stream of blood spurted from His Highness's mouth onto my right cheek. As I was pulling out my handkerchief to wipe the blood away from his mouth, the Duchess cried out to him, 'In Heaven's name, what has happened to you?' At that she slid off the seat and lay on the floor of the car, with her face between his knees.

I had no idea that she too was hit and thought she had simply fainted with fright. Then I heard His Imperial Highness say, 'Sopherl, Sopherl, don't

die. Stay alive for the children!'

At that, I seized the Archduke by the collar of his uniform, to stop his head dropping forward and asked him if he was in great pain. He answered me quite distinctly, 'It's nothing!' His face began to twist somewhat but he went on repeating, six or seven times, ever more faintly as he gradually lost consciousness, 'It's nothing!' Then, after a short pause, there was a violent choking sound caused by the bleeding. It was stopped as we reached the Konak."

References:

Brook-Shepard, Gordon, Archduke of Sarajevo (1984); Dedijer, Vladimir, The Road To Sarajevo (1966); Morton, Frederick, Thunder At Twilight (1989).

"Assassination of Archduke Ferdinand, 1914," EyeWitness to History, www.eyewitnessstohistory.com (1998).

Essay 2
The Beginning of Air Warfare, 1914

As the combatants clashed in the opening days of World War I, the newly invented airplane provided each side with a "bird's eye view" of the battlefield. The value of this new reconnaissance tool was proven at the first major engagement of the war - the Battle of Mons on August 23, 1914. It was at Mons, a small industrial town in southern Belgium, where the advancing British Army collided with the Germans as they marched towards France.

From their vantage point above the battleground, a British observation team could see that the Germans were moving their forces to surround the unsuspecting British army. Alerted, the British high command ordered an immediate retreat into France.

As embarrassing as the withdrawal was for the British, the move saved the army. A few days later, French aerial observers noted a shift in the movement of the German army that exposed its flanks to attack. The resulting battle of the Marne (September 5 - 12), halted the German drive into France and saved Paris.

The airplane's value as an observation platform had been proven. This revelation led to the next developmental step in air warfare - the effort to blind the enemy by shooting down its eyes in the sky. It would be months before a French pilot would strap a machinegun to the nose of his airplane to create the first true fighter plane (see [The Birth of the Fighter Plane, 1915](#)). In the interim, warfare in the air was characterized by the occupants of enemy observation planes firing at one another with pistols, rifles or, as the following account describes, throwing an unloaded revolver at an opponent's spinning propeller.

"Have you got a revolver, old boy? My ammunition's all gone."

Lt. W. R. Read was a pilot in the fledgling Royal Flying Corps. In the early days of August 1914 the Corps was ordered to transport its force of 63 planes to France and provide reconnaissance of enemy troop movements. Read kept a diary of his experiences and we join his story as he and his observer - Jackson - fly over the area of Mons, Belgium. Throughout his narrative, Lt. Read refers to his plane as "Henri:"

"One day, after our reconnaissance over Mons and Charleroi, Jackson spotted a German Taube machine. I had also seen him but we had done our job and I did not want a fight. Jackson was always bloodthirsty, however, and the following shouted conversation ensued:

Jackson: 'Look, old boy!'

'Me: 'Yes, I know.'

'Jackson: 'I think we ought to go for him, old boy.'

'Me: 'Better get home with your report.'



Illustrated London News
Aerial Warfare, 1914
British observers fire on a German
Taube reconnaissance plane

Jackson: 'I think we ought to go for him, old boy.'

Me: 'All right.' "

I changed course for him and, as we passed the Taube, Jackson got in two shots with the rifle. We turned and passed each other again with no obvious result. This happened three or four times. Then, 'Have you got a revolver, old boy? My ammunition's all gone.' I, feeling rather sick of the proceedings, said 'Yes. But no ammo.' 'Give it to me, old boy, and this time fly past him as close as you can.' I carried out instructions and, to my amazement, as soon as we got opposite the Taube, Jackson, with my Army issue revolver grasped by the barrel, threw it at the Taube's propeller. Of course it missed and then, honor satisfied, we turned for home.



A Henri Farman observation plane similar to that flown by Lt. Read He called his "Henri"

22 August. Today the French distinguished themselves by bringing down one of their own airships. They also often fire at us and there is quite as much to fear from one's own side as from the Germans as one leaves the ground. Two machines that went out this morning on reconnaissance came back with several bullet holes in them. In one the observer was shot in the stomach. Herbert, Shekleton, Fuller and I are the 4 pilots in our Flight. We do more flying than most other flights probably because Henri is a more reliable machine and is always ready. Shek. came back last night with six shot holes in his planes. One bullet missed the petrol tank only by an inch.

23 August. Went up for reconnaissance at 11.30 with Major Moss as passenger [observer]. I could not get Henri to climb at first so came down and lightened the load, then we soon got away at 3,800 feet. We found the enemy very thick to the south-east of Thuin and a battle was in progress below us. The artillery on both sides were very busy. It was very interesting to watch. In one field a French battery opened fire; it had not fired more than two rounds per gun when shell after shell from a German battery burst over them. It must have been perfect hell for the French battery and silenced them at once. On the way back some German howitzer battery opened fire on us from north-west of Thuin. One shell splinter passed through my left plane but did no damage. Some infantry in Thuin also wasted a thousand rounds or so trying to bring us down.

'24 August. All yesterday heavy firing to the east and northeast, and it was apparent that the enemy was pushing us back. I was sent off on to some high ground to look out for zeppelins!! NO.3 Squadron-ours-left at 2.30 pm, landed at Berlmont at 6.45 pm, then ordered to retire further back to Le Cateau. A great rush to get off as it was getting dusk. I and some others landed in a wrong field but went on to the right one afterwards. Birch in his Bleriot hit the telegraph wires in getting off and broke his machine, escaping with a shaking himself.

'25 August. Yesterday the Germans had a victory at Mons. Today parts of Charleroi are in flames and the enemy are turning our left flank. I went off at 11 am with Jackson as passenger. All our troops were in retreat, using every road available and making for Le Cateau. The whole of the French cavalry were retiring on Cambrai. Returned from

reconnaissance at 1 pm and at 3.30 orders came to move to St Quentin. As soon as we landed a heavy rain-storm came on and swamped everything. I feel so sorry for poor Henri. It is doing him a great deal of harm, this rain and hot sun.

'26 August. Off on reconnaissance at 7 am with Jackson to report on engagements in the Le Cateau and Espignol area. The whole sight was wonderful - a fierce artillery engagement for the most part, we getting the worst of it. We had all the German army corps against our little force. We could see nothing



A German Taub observation plane

of the French. I watched one of our batteries put out of action, shell after shell burst on it and then there was silence until more men were sent up and it opened up again.

'Le Cateau was in flames. We were shelled by anti-aircraft guns so I kept at 4,500 feet. We are also giving the Germans a bad time-their cavalry and infantry nearly always advanced in masses, offering as they did so a splendid target and getting mown down by the score. There was not a suitable place to land at headquarters at Bertry. In landing we skidded and as soon as we touched ground the landing chassis gave way and Henri pitched on his nose. Jackson was pitched out about ten yards ahead and I was left in the machine. Neither of us was hurt only shaken. Good old Henri, he did me well and even at the last he did not do me in. There was no time to repair the damage as shells were already falling over the town so I hurriedly removed all the instruments, guns, maps etc. and cut off the Union Jack and so left Henri in his last resting place."

References:

This eyewitness account appears in: Moynihan, Michael, *People at War 1914-1918* (1973); Boyne, Walter J., *The Smithsonian Book of Flight* (1987); Reynolds, Quentin, *They Fought for the Sky* (1957); Simkins, Peter, *World War I: the western front* (1991).

"The Beginning of Air Warfare, 1914," *EyeWitness to History*, www.eyewitnesstohistory.com (2008).

Essay 3 Gas Attack, 1916

The First World War accelerated the development of new technologies designed to improve the ability to kill an enemy: the machine gun, the tank, the airplane, the zeppelin, and gas to name a few. Among these, gas was probably the crudest, certainly the most capricious - a change in wind direction could spell disaster. Initially, gas cylinders were simply placed along the front lines facing the enemy trenches. Once the wind was deemed favorable, the cylinders were opened and the gas floated with the breeze, carrying death to the enemy. Later, gas was packed into artillery shells and delivered behind enemy lines. No matter the method of delivery, its impact could produce hell on earth. Chlorine and phosgene gases attacked the lungs ripping the very breath out of its victims. Mustard gas was worse. At least a respirator provided some defense against the chlorine and phosgene gases. Mustard gas attacked the skin - moist skin such as the eyes, armpits, and groin. It burned its way into its victim leaving searing blisters and unimaginable pain. First introduced by the Germans, gas warfare was soon embraced by all the combatants. By the end of the war, one in four of the artillery shells fired on the Western Front contained gas.



French gas attack on German lines
Belgium, 1916

Over The Top

Arthur Empey was an American living in New Jersey when war consumed Europe in 1914. Enraged by the sinking of the Lusitania and loss of the lives of American passengers, he expected to join an American army to combat the Germans. When America did not immediately declare war, Empey boarded a ship to England, enlisted in the British Army (a violation of our neutrality law, but no one seemed to mind) and was soon manning a trench on the front lines.

Empey survived his experience and published his recollections in 1917. We join his story after he has been made a member of a machine gun crew and sits in a British trench peering towards German lines. Conditions are perfect for an enemy gas attack - a slight breeze blowing from the enemy's direction - and the warning has been passed along to be on the lookout:

"We had a new man at the periscope, on this afternoon in question; I was sitting on the fire step, cleaning my rifle, when he called out to me: 'There's a sort of greenish, yellow cloud rolling along the ground out in front, it's coming ---'

But I waited for no more, grabbing my bayonet, which was detached from the rifle, I gave the alarm by banging an empty shell case, which was hanging near the periscope. At the same instant, gongs started ringing down the trench, the signal for Tommy to don his respirator, or smoke helmet, as we call it.

Gas travels quietly, so you must not lose any time; you generally have about eighteen or twenty seconds in which to adjust your gas helmet.

A gas helmet is made of cloth, treated with chemicals. There are two windows, or glass eyes, in it, through which you can see. Inside there is a rubber-covered tube, which goes in the mouth. You breathe through your nose; the gas, passing through the cloth helmet, is neutralized by the action of the chemicals. The foul air is exhaled through the tube in the mouth, this tube being so constructed that it prevents the inhaling of the outside air or gas. One helmet is good for five hours of the strongest gas. Each Tommy carries two of them slung around his shoulder in a waterproof canvas bag. He must wear this bag at all times, even while sleeping. To change a defective helmet, you take out the new one, hold your breath, pull the old one off, placing the new one over your head, tucking in the loose ends under the collar of your tunic.

For a minute, pandemonium reigned in our trench, - Tommies adjusting their helmets, bombers running here and there, and men turning out of the dugouts with fixed bayonets, to man the fire step.

Reinforcements were pouring out of the communication trenches.

Our gun's crew was busy mounting the machine gun on the parapet and bringing up extra ammunition from the dugout.

German gas is heavier than air and soon fills the trenches and dugouts, where it has been known to lurk for two or three days, until the air is purified by means of large chemical sprayers. We had to work quickly, as Fritz generally follows the gas with an infantry attack. A company man on our right was too slow in getting on his helmet; he sank to the ground, clutching at his throat, and after a few spasmodic twistings, went West (died). It was horrible to see him die, but we were powerless to help him. In the corner of a traverse, a little, muddy cur dog, one of the company's pets, was lying dead, with his two paws over his nose.

It's the animals that suffer the most, the horses, mules, cattle, dogs, cats, and rats, they having no helmets to save them.

Tommy does not sympathize with rats in a gas attack.

At times, gas has been known to travel, with dire results, fifteen miles behind the lines.

A gas, or smoke helmet, as it is called, at the best is a vile-smelling thing, and it is not long before one gets a violent headache from wearing it.

Our eighteen-pounders were bursting in No Man's Land, in an effort, by the artillery, to disperse the gas clouds.

The fire step was lined with crouching men, bayonets fixed, and bombs near at hand to repel the expected attack.

Our artillery had put a barrage of curtain fire on the German lines, to try and break up their attack and keep back reinforcements.

I trained my machine gun on their trench and its bullets were raking the parapet. Then over they came, bayonets glistening. In their respirators, which have a large snout in front, they looked like some horrible nightmare.

All along our trench, rifles and machine guns spoke, our shrapnel was bursting over their heads. They went down in heaps, but new ones took the place of the fallen. Nothing could stop that mad rush. The Germans reached our barbed wire, which had previously been demolished by their shells, then it was bomb against bomb, and the devil for all.



British Gas Helmet, 1916

Suddenly, my head seemed to burst from a loud 'crack' in my ear. Then my head began to swim, throat got dry, and a heavy pressure on the lungs warned me that my helmet was leaking. Turning my gun over to No. 2, I changed helmets.

The trench started to wind like a snake, and sandbags appeared to be floating in the air. The noise was horrible; I sank onto the fire step, needles seemed to be pricking my flesh, then blackness.

I was awakened by one of my mates removing my smoke helmet. How delicious that cool, fresh air felt in my lungs.

A strong wind had arisen and dispersed the gas.

They told me that I had been 'out' for three hours; they thought I was dead.



The attack had been repulsed after a hard fight. Twice the Germans had gained a foothold in our trench, but had been driven out by counter-attacks. The trench was filled with their dead and ours. Through a periscope, I counted eighteen dead Germans in our wire; they were a ghastly sight in their horrible-looking respirators.

I examined my first smoke helmet, a bullet had gone through it on the left side, just grazing my ear, the gas had penetrated through the hole made in the cloth.

Out of our crew of six, we lost two killed and two wounded.

That night we buried all of the dead, excepting those in No Man's Land. In death there is not much distinction, friend and foe are treated alike.

The author recovering from wounds received at the Front

After the wind had dispersed the gas, the R. A. M. C. got busy with their chemical sprayers, spraying out the dugouts and low parts of the trenches to dissipate any

fumes of the German gas which may have been lurking in same."

References:

Empey, Arthur Guy, *Over The Top* (1917); Lloyd, Alan, *The War In The Trenches* (1976).

"Gas Attack, 1916," *EyeWitness to History*, eyewitnesstohistory.com (1999).

Essay 4
Christmas in the Trenches, 1914

By the end of November 1914 the crushing German advance that had swallowed the Low Countries and threatened France had been checked by the allies before it could reach Paris. The opposing armies stared at each other from a line of hastily built defensive trenches that began at the edge of the English Channel and continued to the border of Switzerland. Barbed wire and parapets defended the trenches and between them stretched a "No-Mans-Land" that in some areas was no more than 30 yards wide.

Life in the trenches was abominable. Continuous sniping, machinegun fire and artillery shelling took a deadly toll. The misery was heightened by the ravages of Mother Nature, including rain, snow and cold. Many of the trenches, especially those in the low-lying British sector to the west, were continually flooded, exposing the troops to frost bite and "trench foot."

This treacherous monotony was briefly interrupted during an unofficial and spontaneous "Christmas Truce" that began on Christmas Eve. Both sides had received Christmas packages of food and presents. The clear skies that ended the rain further lifted the spirits on both sides of British troops in the trenches no-mans-land.



The Germans seem to have made the first move. During the evening of December 24 they delivered a chocolate cake to the British line accompanied by a note that proposed a cease fire so that the Germans could have a concert. The British accepted the proposal and offered some tobacco as their present to the Germans. The good will soon spread along the 27-mile length of the British line. Enemy soldiers shouted to one another from the trenches, joined in singing songs and soon met one another in the middle of no-mans-land to talk, exchange gifts and in some areas to take part in impromptu soccer matches. The high command on both sides took a dim view of the activities and orders were issued to stop the fraternizing with varying results. In some areas the truce ended Christmas Day in others the following day and in others it extended into January. One thing is for sure - it never happened again.

"We and the Germans met in the middle of no-man's-land."

Frank Richards was a British soldier who experienced the "Christmas Truce". We join his story on Christmas morning 1914:

"On Christmas morning we stuck up a board with 'A Merry Christmas' on it. The enemy had stuck up a similar one. Platoons would sometimes go out for twenty-four hours' rest - it was a day at least out of the trench and relieved the monotony a bit - and my platoon had gone out in this way the night before, but a few of us stayed behind to see what would happen. Two of our men then threw their equipment off and jumped on the parapet with their hands above their heads. Two of the Germans done the same and commenced to walk up the river bank, our two men going to meet them. They met and shook hands and then we all got out of the trench.

Buffalo Bill [the Company Commander] rushed into the trench and endeavoured to prevent it, but he was too late: the whole of the Company were now out, and so were the Germans. He had to accept the situation, so soon he and the other company officers climbed out too. We and the Germans met in the middle of no-man's-land. Their officers was also now out. Our officers exchanged greetings with them. One of the German officers said that he wished he had a camera to take a snapshot, but they were not allowed to carry cameras. Neither were our officers.

We mucked in all day with one another. They were Saxons and some of them could speak English. By the look of them their trenches were in as bad a state as our own. One of their men, speaking in English, mentioned that he had worked in Brighton for some years and that he was fed up to the neck with this damned war and would be glad when it was all over. We told him that he wasn't the only one that was fed up with it. We did not allow them in our trench and they did not allow us in theirs.

The German Company-Commander asked Buffalo Bill if he would accept a couple of barrels of beer and assured him that they would not make his men drunk. They had plenty of it in the brewery. He accepted the offer with thanks and a couple of their men rolled the barrels over and we took them into our trench. The German officer sent one of his men back to the trench, who appeared shortly after carrying a tray with bottles and glasses on it. Officers of both sides clinked glasses and drunk one another's health. Buffalo Bill had presented them with a plum pudding just before. The officers came to an understanding that the unofficial truce would end at midnight. At dusk we went back to our respective trenches.

...The two barrels of beer were drunk, and the German officer was right: if it was possible for a man to have drunk the two barrels himself he would have bursted before he had got drunk. French beer was rotten stuff. Just before midnight we all made it up not to commence firing before they did. At night there was always plenty of firing by both sides if there were no working parties or patrols out. Mr Richardson, a young officer who had just joined the Battalion and was now a platoon officer in my company wrote a poem during the night about the Briton and the Bosche meeting in no-man's-land on Christmas Day, which he read out to us. A few days later it was published in The Times or Morning Post, I believe.



British and German troops mingle in No Mans Land Christmas 1914

During the whole of Boxing Day [the day after Christmas] we never fired a shot, and they the same, each side seemed to be waiting for the other to set the ball a-rolling. One of their men shouted across in English and inquired how we had enjoyed the beer. We shouted back and told him it was very weak but that we were very grateful for it. We were conversing off and on during the whole of the day.

We were relieved that evening at dusk by a battalion of another brigade. We were mighty surprised as we had heard no whisper of any relief during the day. We told the men who relieved us how we had spent the last couple of days with the enemy, and they told us that by what they had been told the whole of the British troops in the line, with one or two exceptions, had mucked in with the enemy. They had only been out of action

themselves forty-eight hours after being twenty-eight days in the front-line trenches. They also told us that the French people had heard how we had spent Christmas Day and were saying all manner of nasty things about the British Army."

References:

This eyewitness account appears in Richards, Frank, *Old Soldiers Never Die* (1933); Keegan, John, *The First World War* (1999); Simkins, Peter, *World War I, the Western Front* (1991).

"Christmas in the Trenches, 1914," *EyeWitness to History*, www.eyewitnesstohistory.com (2006).

World War One
Kiffen Rockwell
On Site and Outreach Lesson

Goal:

To examine the role of airplane warfare in World War One (so soon after the Wright Brother's first flight).

To introduce students to Kiffen Rockwell, an Asheville citizen whose desire to fly and fight in Europe led him to enlist in the Lafayette Escadrille, a special unit of the French flying force.

Objectives:

- ❖ The students will examine photographs of early fighting planes and assess how this new technology would impact and change warfare tactics.
- ❖ The students will examine the career of Kiffen Rockwell and others like him and describe the possible motivation of those who chose this path.
- ❖ The students will experience samples of training exercises and describe how each would be beneficial to aircraft warfare.

NC Standard Course of Study: Social Studies

4 th grade	5 th grade
3.01	2.03
3.02	4.05
3.04	
4.03	
4.05	
7.02	
7.03	

Lesson:

1. Review with students the beginnings of WW One before America enters the war (from their Pre Visit Lesson)
 - a. Show artifacts from collection relating to WW One.
2. Who has heard of Kiffin Rockwell?
 - a. From historical marker, teacher may have mentioned, etc.
3. Begin Slide Show and text about Rockwell (see supplemental materials)
4. Show artifacts from our collection relating to Rockwell.
5. Show airplane model from Escadrille.
6. Continue slide show about Escadrille.
 - a. At the Training Tactics slide, have student brainstorm about what moves like that in the air do to your body.
 - b. One training exercise was to turn round and round and then walk along a board raised a few inches from the ground. Trainees had to repeat the exercise until they could walk it easily.
7. Continue slide show
8. On-Site: Tour Smith McDowell House focusing on the later owners of the house especially C. Brewster Chapman who was owner here during WW One.
9. What did we learn today?

Post Visit Lesson
World War I: People, Places, and Events

Goal:

To provide a research opportunity using World War One as the topic.

Objectives

Students will obtain information using traditional and online resources.

Students will judge the accuracy of online information.

Students will list their sources in a bibliography.

Students will create a presentation about their World War I topic.

Materials

Internet access

Reference materials

Procedures

1. List World War I topics on chart paper: (i.e. leaders, submarines, flying aces, the role of women, the League of Nations, soldiers, battles, inventions. Invite students to add to the list of topics.
2. Ask each student to choose a topic, and encourage them to choose a topic that they are interested in learning more about.
3. Brainstorm resources where students can look for information. (i.e. the Internet, books, encyclopedias.)
4. Have students list what they already know about their World War I topic. Then help them develop questions that will guide their research.
5. Students may benefit from looking at photographs to help them generate questions about this era.
6. Encourage students to use both online and traditional sources for their research.
7. Ask students to create a product or presentation to share their research information. Some ideas include:
 - writing a biography and then reading it dressed as that person.
 - creating the front page of a newspaper, complete with headlines and short articles.
 - making a diorama that shows some war event.
 - drawing maps that compare the geography of Europe before and after the war.
 - writing a report about how inventions, such as the telegraph, machine gun, and airplane, had an effect on the war.
8. To show that their work is authentic, students should create a bibliography.
9. Students invite other classes to view and hear about their World War I research.