

The soldier

A loud cheer arrived as another brave and fearless person joined the war. Joe on the other hand wasn't so brave but very loyal. Joe was having thoughts about joining the army, they say it would be over by Christmas and it would be a shame to miss it. It would be an adventure anyways. Joe went to the nearest recruiting station. They told him to report to the barracks in four days and was given a railway warrant.

On the train he met some people the same age as him as he heard them saying their age earlier, 18 years old. They were told they were not going to be in the same trenches. Joe wasn't too bothered as they had just met.

Joe arrived at a small train station in France that was being used as a supply depot. Trains and trucks were being unloaded. There were loads of soldiers and horses around but to Joe it was still part of the adventure

They were finally on their feet, they marched through a rich French town. There were crowds cheering and shouting, people waving, Joe felt proud. The more they passed through the town the more empty and derelict and ruined it got, there were lots wounded soldiers lying on piles of mud and there were people carrying all their belongings to escape the fearful bombs that pounded the town

At last Joe's troop ended the marching period and were ordered to get on the omnibuses. Joe had never heard of an omnibus as he lives in Wales. The omnibuses drove them through the demolished town. Then he was at the trenches. The trenches were 3ft wide and 7ft high. There was also a firestep that allowed the soldiers to see what was happening on the battlefield also known as no-man's land, they also used the firestep (which was 2ft high) to go over the top. They walked into the trenches and they were told this was the reserve trench it was full of soldiers with no legs and/or no arms.

"I can't look," Joe exclaimed.

"You're going to see a whole lot more than that," laughed the officer.

The troop moved on to the communication trench where some soldiers were stuck in the wet, muddy, cold, bloody mud. Joe was regretting the decision he made of going to war. He could smell burning from the artillery that they would fire to try and blow up the enemy trenches.

The trenches crossed Belgium to France, you could hear explosions coming from the battlefield, people screaming for their mothers could also be heard.

After a few days Joe was starting to feel comfortable "I wish I was at home" was a phrase he said a lot along with his fellow soldiers.

Tuesday July 1st 1916

Joe woke up to shouting. Frozen, Joe was told he was going over the top with hundreds and hundreds of men.

He hadn't been over the top; he had only seen it. Joe was in the first wave along with most of his friends, Jack, John, Stew and Mack. Joe was ordered to attack the German trenches at 9am which was only an hour away. "One hour lads say your prayers"

"30 minutes to go boys" Joe's mind was racing; is this it for me?

But Joe wasn't backing down, he was here for his country...

"15 minutes boys." Joe was thinking of what he had done before he had left for war. Everything he had done he regretted he wished that he would come back.

"2 minutes let's go lads, prepare your guns and get everything ready yeah?" Joe prepared his gun while watching his friends struggle. Joe had been in the army before the war and he had remembered how to load and prepare his gun correctly and release the safety hatch. Joe remembered that this was for his country and with that he became angry.

"THE GERMANS SHALL DIE" Joe screamed very loudly that everyone in his trench looked at him, he didn't care though.

"40 seconds left, lads get ready..." Joe breathed and he remembered what his mum had always said "Happy breathing Joe, happy breathing." It had always helped him whenever he was angry. He found a picture with him and his mum together. He let out a tear as that might not happen again.

"10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1, GO MOVE IT, CAPTURE THE TRENCHES"

The whistle blew.

Joe ran as fast as he could. He blind shot one of the minigunners, who was firing at his teammates. He managed to fire down one of them but another fired at him. All Joe could think about was his family and how he might not see them ever again.

Joe was shot.....He fell into a crater that one of the shells had created. Joe was exhausted.

Joe reached for his water but he couldn't move.

Joe was craving sleep. He hadn't slept in days.

He closed his eyes.

And never opened them again.

Written by Jayden, Year 6