

Activity Book for Schools 10

# The Experience of Battle

You've probably seen pictures of soldiers in battle on television or in books. You may have even played war games on a computer or games console. But what is it really like to be in a battle? How do soldiers prepare for, and deal with, the consequences of battle? You can explore the answers to these questions by finding stories about battles in the *Soldiers and Chiefs* exhibition and imagining yourself in the soldier's place.



**My Name:**

**As you find each story,** write down one word that best describes the feelings of the soldiers involved in that story. If you feel the circumstance would lead to different kinds of feelings at the same time, choose two or more emotions. If you cannot think of a word, use one of the words from this list.

excited

frightened

panicky

overwhelmed

horrified

shocked

confident

resigned

eager

exhausted

terrified

calm

bored

hopeless

grateful

guilty

confused

worried

upset

relieved

stunned

determined

sad

vengeful

proud

detached

disgusted

scared



**Enter the first room after the introduction space.**

# 'The British Garrison in Ireland'

## 1 Garrison Life – The Stokes Tapestry

Stop at the large display in the middle of the room.

Look at the Battle of Waterloo shown at the top of this colourful tapestry. The scenes suggest the chaos of battle, with friends and enemies all mixed together.

If you saw a friend die in battle, how would you feel?



If you saw an enemy die in battle, how would you feel?

**In this activity book, you will discover stories about soldiers before, during and after battles. Start by looking for these particular soldiers in the scenes on the cloth. Each soldier or group of soldiers shows one of the aspects of the experience of battle.**

**Put a tick in the box when you find each scene on the Stokes Tapestry.**

### Comrades

The main reason that soldiers are able to fight in a battle is that they are fighting with their friends. Like you, soldiers feel more confident when they are with the people they know well, and they will take risks to protect those people.



### Training

In battle, a soldier who is trained to use his weapon and co-operate with his fellow soldiers will feel more confident and be more effective than one who doesn't really know what he is supposed to do.



## Fighting the Enemy

In a battle soldiers have to kill people. In recent times, they usually have been able to kill the enemy at a distance with a rifle bullet or an artillery shell, and didn't really see what happened. Before then, they often had to encounter the enemy at arm's length, in order to kill him with a pike, sword or pistol.



## Being Wounded

Many soldiers fear being wounded almost as much as being killed. A bullet wound (or in the past, a sword cut) can change your life forever, making you unable to live as you did before.



## Being Captured

Soldiers who are captured by the enemy are never sure what to expect. In some cases, they are executed; in others they are placed in prison camps to sit out the war. Imprisoned soldiers often find the inactivity and lack of freedom difficult to bear.



## Surviving

Soldiers say it's exciting to be shot at and not hit, but it's horrible if your good friend is killed beside you. Men who survive a battle are often proud of their part in it, but they also mourn the loss of comrades. Being in a battle changes people's lives forever.



Enter the next room.

# 'Warfare in Ireland'

## 2 Irish Wars of Religion - figure of Pikeman in the Army of Leinster

Stop in front of the soldier who holds a long pole.

### Training

This pikeman would have been trained with other new recruits. They would have performed drills with the pike over and over until they could do them automatically.

How might the pikeman feel during the training?



## 3 1798 Rebellion - figure of Croppy Prisoner

Stop in front of the boy who stands near the big cannon.

### Being Captured

This prisoner awaits his fate as a rebel in 1798. Will he be executed or transported overseas to labour as a convict in Australia?

How would he have felt while awaiting his fate?

## 4 1798 Rebellion - audio of James Hope

Turn around and stop at the display in the corner to your right. Press the audio button on the display case.

### Comrades

Listen to the second speaker tell how James Hope and some friends, positioned in the church yard, took on the local cavalry in 1798 who were firing at them from the street.

What word would you use to describe Hope's actions when he was left in charge of his 18 friends?



Leave through the doorway, walk past the row of helmets and enter the next room.

## 'The Wild Geese'

### 5 Irish in the French Army - audio of Captain William Lawless

Turn right at the doorway and stop at the last display along the wall. Press the audio button on the display case.

#### Being Wounded

This account of Irish soldiers fighting the British in the Napoleonic Wars reveals how, in the middle of a battle, soldiers can disregard the effects of a serious wound.

How might the soldier named Bood have felt as he continued to fight after he was shot?

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### 6 The Battle of Fontenoy - audio-visual on the model of the battlefield

Stop at the model of a battlefield in the centre of the room.

#### Fighting the Enemy

**If you have time**, watch this six-minute audio-visual account of the Battle of Fontenoy – there is an eight-minute gap between showings. If you don't have time, go to the next activity.

If you were a soldier in Dillon's regiment how would you feel about waiting to get at the enemy?

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Leave this room, walk through the next room, and toward the large painting of a group of soldiers.

## 'Irish in the British Service'

### 7 Red Coats and Muzzle Loaders, Crimea - Redan Massey panel and sword

Turn right at the doorway, then turn left around the display case and stop at the end of the case.

#### Surviving

By acting bravely in battle, Lieutenant Massey gained recognition, a presentation sword and an army nickname. His actions helped him eventually to become a general.

When Massey met his old school friends after his famous feat, how do you think he felt?

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## Firearms Interactive - three weapons and videos

Stop at the three firearms in the centre of the room and pick up the middle weapon.

### Training

Here you can feel what a new soldier felt while being trained to use a firearm.

How would you feel if you were the soldier being trained by this sergeant?

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Leave this room, cross the bridge, walk past the aeroplane and enter the next room.

## 'The First World War'

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## Young People at War - John McLoughlin personal story, panel and scarf

Stop at the displays on your right with shadow figures on the wall.

### Being Wounded

This is the tragic story of a young soldier badly wounded in battle.

What word might describe his feelings as he lay paralysed in the hospital as a result of fighting at the Battle of the Somme?

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## The War of the First Volunteers, The Ordeal of the Toffs - panel

Stay to the right of the big gun on wheels and stop at the display case along the wall.

### Comrades

In the First World War, the British Army created 'pals battalions', so that men from the same community could enlist and fight together. Find out what happened to these Dublin pals.

Imagine you were marching out of these barracks together with your friends from your sporting team to go to war; what is the word for how you would feel?

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## 11 War in the Mud, Escape from Holzminden - Philip Smith personal story, card and photograph

Walk further into the room and stop at the display with the date 1917 above it.

### Surviving

War is sometimes exciting – find out how Philip Smith tried to escape from a German prison camp, and how he remembered this event for the rest of his life.

How did Philip Smith feel when he got together with his old comrades from Holzminden Camp on the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the escape, in 1938?

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## 'The Irish Wars'

## 12 Death on the Street, You Are a Witness - film footage

Stop at the video screen, just around the corner.

### Fighting the Enemy

Listen for the gunshot as you activate this brief film clip of an event on a Dublin street. In guerrilla war, there are no big battles, just brief, bloody shootouts, often between undercover fighters.

How might each man have felt at the moment before the shootout?

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## 13 Irish Wars of Independence, Bloody Sunday -

Peadar Clancy panel and vest

Stop at the display to the left of the exit.

### Being Captured

Peadar Clancy's fate at the hands of the British Auxiliaries was horrible, but not that unusual. Similar things happen in guerrilla wars today.

When Michael Collins attended Clancy's funeral, how do you think he felt?

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Leave this room and go down the stairs.

## 'Claiming the Future'

### 14 After the Wars, Living with the Aftermath of War - panel and leg brace

Turn left at the bottom of the stairs and stop at the display case near the bench.

#### Being Wounded

Many soldiers survived their wounds, but their lives were changed forever.

If you had to wear a leg brace for the rest of your life, how might you feel about this constant reminder of your experience of battle?

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Walk past the stairs and enter the large open area.

## 'The Emergency: The Second World War'

### 15 Irish Men and Women at War, Airborne to Battle: Paratroops - panel and camouflage smock

Walk toward the window, around the curved wall and stop at the display case.

#### Fighting the Enemy

The paratrooper Samuel Garland had the unusual job of dropping into battle from the air. He wore this outfit during a jump and survived the battle.

Imagine how you would feel floating down by parachute as you are shot at from below.

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## Being in a Battle

Now that you have discovered stories of eyewitnesses to battles, think about the words you used to describe the feelings of those people.

### In your opinion:

In a battle, is a soldier more likely to feel fear and pain than excitement?

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Do you think that the effects of being in a battle stop after the shooting ends?

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Is a real battle anything like what you see in films or play as a video game?

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## Want to know more?

For more information on exhibitions and education programmes, contact the Education and Outreach Department of the National Museum of Ireland.

Tel: 01 648 6453 Fax: 01 679 1025 email: [bookings@museum.ie](mailto:bookings@museum.ie)

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Cover image: Leg brace, Lt. Charles William Sullivan, South Irish Horse and Royal Irish Fusiliers, First World War, National Museum of Ireland

