



**Written and Illustrated by:**

**Nehemiah Slemons**

This product was created under license. Genesys and its logo, and Genesys Foundry and its logo, are trademarks of Fantasy Flight Games in the U.S.A. and other countries. All Fantasy Flight Games characters and character names, and the distinctive likenesses thereof, are trademarks of Fantasy Flight Games. [www.FantasyFlightGames.com](http://www.FantasyFlightGames.com).

This work contains material that is copyright Fantasy Flight Games and/or other authors. Such material is used with permission under the Community Content Agreement for Genesys Foundry.

All other original material in this work is copyright 2021 by Two Acres Game Forge and published under the Community Content Agreement for Genesys Foundry.

## Table of Contents

WWI & Setting Primer	5
<b>Player's Guide 6</b>	
Classes	6
Trench Games	6
<b>Game Master's Toolkit 8</b>	
Role Playing the Great War	8
Setting up the session	8
Session Tempo	8
Hazards of the trenches	8
General Trench Rules	9
Dealing with Player Churn	9
Ally mechanics	9
Barrage	9

# WWI & Setting Primer

World War 1 was supposed to be the war to end all wars. Soldiers fought in the most brutal conditions mankind has ever seen. Country sides were turned into crater covered hellscapes. Fallen soldiers were left in the mud, buried slowly only to resurface with fresh shelling.

It was the first mechanical war but was still fought with outdated tactics.

Mud crunchers is designed to let players explore the horrors of trench warfare. It allows for the players to take on the role of an individual soldier having to work their way through the Great War. Players will be thrust into the middle of the bloody quagmire that was the Great War.

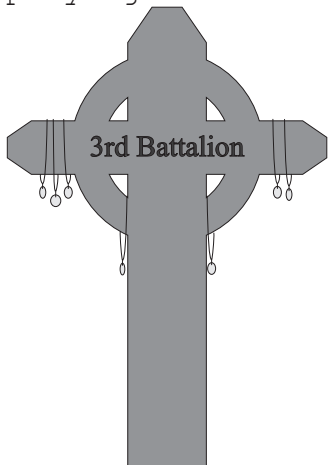
Out of respect for those who fought and died in the Great War, Mud Crunchers will avoid using any actual units, names, or battlefields and will instead design modules inspired by those elements.



## Roleplaying the Great War

Soldiers of the Great War would spend months in the trenches faced with all kinds of horrors. They would be shelled, sniped, attacked, gassed, and had to deal with constant health conditions associated with being surrounded by dead and decomposing bodies. Being ordered over the top meant facing near certain death from a heavily defended enemy.

Players in this campaign are playing as basic infantry units.



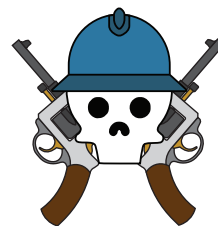
Your job is a lot more simple than many role playing campaigns. You just have to follow the orders given to you and not die. And if you do survive, you may get a medal to commemorate your valiant service.

Once rewarded, you are sent back to the trench to wait for your next orders.

## Classes

Mud crunchers uses a simplified character system to speed up the creation of characters. Given that players are part of a standing army, a standardized character template makes sense in this setting.

### Captain:



Provides several important boosts to their squad.

Soak: 2 | Wound  
Threshold: 15 | Strain  
Threshold: 12

- **Pistol:** Short Range: 6 Damage
  - **Signal Flare:** used to call artillery
  - **Inspire:** Once per encounter the captain can inspire the team. Everyone gets a boost die for a turn
  - **Rally:** Everyone else on the team gets an ally who adds to their attack and total wounds.
-

## Rifleman:



Basic soldier, good multi-role unit

Soak: 2 | Wound  
Threshold: 15 | Strain  
Threshold: 12

- **Bolt Action Rifle:** Medium Range: 9 Damage
  - **Grenade:** Short Range: 15 Damage: 10' Radius
- 

## Sapper:



Sappers are perfect for breaking through fortifications

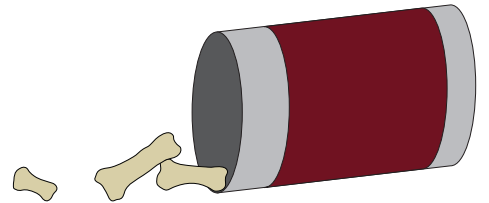
Soak: 2 | Wound  
Threshold: 15 | Strain  
Threshold: 12

- **Pistol:** Short Range: 6 Damage
- **Dynamite:** 20' Radius: 20 Damage

## Trench Games

### Knuckle Bones

Players roll two ability and two difficulty dice against each other for a better roll. Two advantages count as one success, and two disadvantages count as one failure. They can barter kit between each other.



## Machine Gunner:



Heavy weapons, good at suppressing enemy units

Soak: 2 | Wound  
Threshold: 15 | Strain  
Threshold: 12

- **Machine Gun:** Long Range (with setback die): 9 Damage
    - Can use 2 advantage for a second attack even on a failed attack
    - The Machine Gunner must use an action to set up the gun before firing. The machine gunner must use an action to pick up the gun before moving
- 

## Sniper:



Sharpshooter, good at scouting out terrain keeping watch

Soak: 2 | Wound  
Threshold: 15 | Strain  
Threshold: 12

- **Scoped Rifle:** Long Range: 12 Damage
  - **Pistol:** Short Range: 6 Damage
-



## Role Playing the Great War

This setting will play quite differently compared to most RPG campaigns. Players will generally be confined to a small section of trench and will only leave it in death or to charge forward into a hail of enemy bullets.

Campaigns are designed to revolve around a series of smaller missions that will have the players constantly attacking or retreating. Anything larger than the battle map in front of the players will be decided by generals far removed from the players and should be described by the GM.

Generals of the great war tended to be incredibly detached from the conditions their men were suffering through and would frequently ask suicidal things of their men.

## Setting up the session

Play will be centered around a battle map of the section of trench the players are fighting in. Throughout the course of the session, players will have very few

if any options to move beyond this section. Each campaign module will include maps and unit tokens to help players visualize where they are at, and what they are being tasked with.

At the beginning of the session, the GM will decide which side of the map players are on. All maps will have the ability to play from either side. Once the side has been decided, players can pick where in the trench they want to be.



Depending on the scenario the GM wants to play, there could be units set on the flanks to provide some support for the players.



## Session Tempo

As in any campaign, the right tempo is unique to every party. However, as a baseline, we recommend a tempo similar to this.

- The GM describes of the trenches and does character introductions/ review of the last mission
- Pepper the players with a light barrage and/or a raiding party
- Let the players sit for a while (keeping watch, maybe having to deal with a sniper, but generally quiet)
- Give the players their mission

## Hazards of the trenches

Periods of down time should be punctuated by random barrages of artillery as the enemy tries to inflict attritional wounds on the players. Typically, these will just be light barrages to keep the players tied down.

Enemy raiding parties (4 to 6 enemy soldiers) should also be a frequent hazard for the players. To avoid being surprised by raiding parties, players should always have someone on watch.

Players should also be wary of enemy snipers. Snipers will sit in their trenches, or in hides built in no-man's-land. They will target any player who appears above the trench



## General

### Trench Rules

When a character is in a trench,

they are in cover and the attacker must add one difficulty die. Defenders may reduce the challenge die by 1 when firing.

If a character is ducked down, they cannot be attacked. Artillery is the exception to this rule.

Trenches will also typically be protected by rings of barbed wire. Barbed wire must be cleared before players can advance through it. This can be done either through explosives, or with wire cutters. When a player cuts the wire, they must expend an action to do so.

In mission types where the players take a position, the enemy should always counterattack. This was common practice throughout the war, if a position was ever lost, retake it as quickly as possible.

## Dealing with Player Churn

This setting will frequently kill players. GMs should let that happen. If a player falls during an attack, they will be out until the party is back in their trench and relatively safe. Then the player(s) that died during the encounter can draw new characters and join the survivors as reinforcements.

This will be a bit of a change from normal campaigns that are designed for players to grow fond of their characters and spend lots of time with them. Work with our party to find a way for them to still connect with the characters they are inhabiting, despite knowing that they are likely to die in any given encounter.

## Ally mechanics

### Flanking Units

When attacking, or defending a trench, players may have friendly units on their flanks. This mechanic will primarily come into play during large scale assaults and is designed to keep the number of NPC combatants down, while still allowing the conflict to feel larger than just the players. By nature, this part of the conflict is abstract, and can be adjusted according to the needs of the GM. During these attacks, roll one proficiency and on challenge die every turn.

- Success means their keeping pace or holding their position; failure means they are falling behind or the enemy is getting closer.
- Advantage means either players get a boost die, or the enemy have a setback die; disadvantage means the enemy gets a boost die firing on their attack.
- Triumph means they gain some measurable advantage (if they are near the enemy, they take the trench) despair means they are eliminated.



### Reinforcements

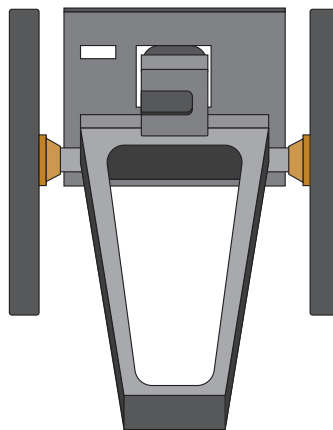
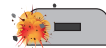
There are also situations such as the inclusion of a captain, or being a part of a grand assault, where players will be given allies. These NPCs let players upgrade one ability die for a proficiency die on all checks. They also add 8 wounds to the player's total.

## Barrage

At various points in a mission, players may be subjected to a barrage. To roll for this, roll an equal number of ability and difficulty dice. In this roll, success and failures do not cancel each other out, it is simply a tally of how many shells fall around the players. For a light barrage roll one of each. For a medium barrage roll two of each. For a heavy barrage roll three of each. And for an all-out assault, roll 4 of each.

- Each failure is a shell that explodes away from the players
- Each disadvantage is a dud shell
- Each advantage is a shell that falls close enough to rattle the players, but not cause damage. Players must roll a resilience check or suffer 3 strain per advantage.
- Each success is a shell that falls close enough to the players to cause 5 damage.

### When a captain calls artillery



When the captain call for artillery, roll a light barrage. The only difference from the above rules are that every failure is a shell that lands on the player, causing 5 damage to each.

