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## **Changing Times**

Two important world wars were **waged** in the 1900s. The first war lasted from 1914–1918. In the 1920s and 1930s, people called this war the Great War. Many different countries fought in this war. Like in all wars, nations took sides against each other. Today, the Great War is called World War I. In the 1940s, the world waged a second war, World War II. It was even more terrible than the first war. The United States joined in both wars and many American soldiers died.



American soldiers return home from World War I and march in a parade in Minneapolis, Minnesota.



Soldiers fought from trenches like this during World War I.

These two wars were key events in United States and world history. Many important years passed between the two world wars, and the events of the years between the wars changed the course of United States history.

During those years, the way people lived in the United States changed. For a while, many Americans were successful and wealthy. Then, the Great Depression hit in 1929 and changed everything. Between the wars was a time of great extremes in the United States.

## **Trench Warfare**

Soldiers in the world wars fought in trenches. This meant that soldiers on each side dug into the ground. They made underground forts that protected them from enemy fire. Enemy trenches might be as close as 30 yards (27.4 meters) from each other. This made war even more brutal and dangerous.

## Saying No

After World War I,
countries wanted to
unite. They wanted to
work together for peace.
The League of Nations was
formed. America never
joined the League of
Nations. Many
Americans wanted to
stay away from the
problems in Europe.