



28 June 1914

http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Gavrilo_Princip_captured_in_Sarajevo_1914.jp

The Blackadder problem

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“The real ‘historical’ War ceased to exist in November 1918. What followed was the resurrection and re-working of the War largely in terms of novels, memoirs, and war literature in general...”

“For years it was impossible to attend a military presentation without a clip of *Blackadder Goes Forth* discussing the strategic imperative of inching Field Marshal Haig’s drinks cabinet closer to Berlin...”

Richard Holmes, *Tommy*, HarperCollins, London, 2004. p xvii to xviii.

National narratives...



United Kingdom: Haig, the Somme, “Lions led by Donkeys”

France: Foch, Verdun, the *union sacree*



Germany: *Sonderweg*, the Kaiser, and Hitler

And many more. Eg. Canada – Passchendaele. Australia – ANZAC Bay

It's just the sort of thing we ought to be good at.

World War I task force [assessment statistics](#)

World War I pages by quality	
Quality	Total pages
★ FA	121
★ FL	15
ⓘ A	73
⊕ GA	413
B	924
C	1,449
Start	5,512
Stub	4,913
Assessed	13,420
Total	13,420

**121 Featured Articles,
that's not bad is it? (1%)**

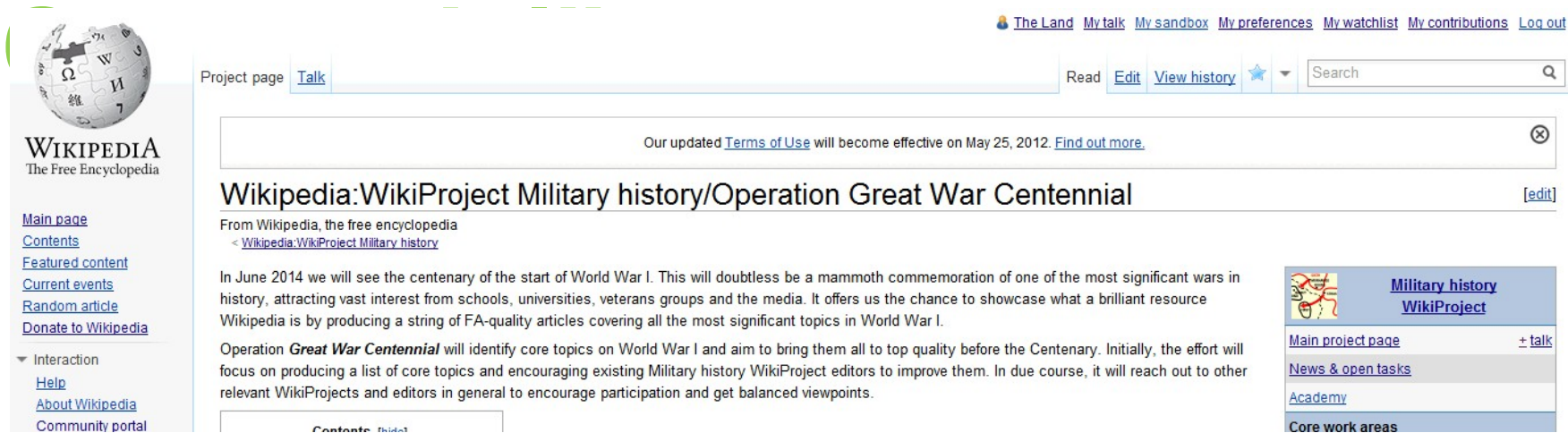
BUT

**54 are warships , 45 are
people**

**Only 8 are on battles or
other military events**

**Only 2 are on topics
related to the impact of the
war on society
(1546 B or better: 11%)**

Another way of looking at it: “Operation Great War



The screenshot shows a Wikipedia page for the 'Operation Great War Centennial' project. The page title is 'Wikipedia:WikiProject Military history/Operation Great War Centennial'. The content describes the project's goal to produce high-quality articles for the centenary of World War I. A sidebar on the right lists 'Military history WikiProject' with links to 'Main project page', 'News & open tasks', 'Academy', and 'Core work areas'. The main text includes a notice about updated Terms of Use and a paragraph explaining the project's focus on core topics and quality improvement.

270 “core” articles (mainly on ‘hard’ military topics, rather than social impact...)

6 FA (only 1 about warships): 2%

55 B-class or better: 20%

- So **80% of the most important articles suck.**

What are our partner institutions doing?

Europeana – Roadshows (with Editathons attached) where people come along and digitise family history materials

JISC – Pushing forward the creation of Open Educational Resources – assessing, prioritising, developing

Imperial War Museum – A very big family history project

Our first World War I Editathon

**British Library, Saturday 16
June**

Organised with JISC

**Bringing academics and
Wikipedians together and
seeing what happens!**

- * Strategy and Operations**
- * Medicine and World War I**
- * Global Impact of the War**



http://uk.wikimedia.org/wiki/World_War_I/World_War_I_Editathon

Where next?

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