

HISTORY

THE GREAT UNDERGROUND WAR

5 x 45' (ENG, GER)

This fascinating series unearths the story about how the Great War went on underground.

In this unique take on WW1, British archaeologists meet up with German, Austrian and French experts, who together explore actual tunnels – from the Italian Alps to the plains of Belgium. We will be featuring expert reconstructions, unique aerial drone footage of the fronts, and never-before seen images of tunnels and bunkers. Five tales of tunnellers and miners who dug under the enemy when there was no other choice but to attack from beneath. Five legendary battles. Five tales of human sacrifice and tenacity. Five bloody battles that involved men from all over the world.



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1. The Mines of Ypres

The story of how a unique British tunnelling technique developed for the mud of Flanders was employed to win the strategic ground during the gruesome trench warfare of the Ypres Salient.

2. The Secret of the Somme

An exploration of newly discovered fortresses, dugouts and bunkers tells the story of the innovative German engineering that made defences resistant to massive bombardments.

3. Vauquois, Hill of Death

For three years the Germans and French blew each other up with massive explosions, using a maze of underground galleries and tunnels. The whole story is told through the preserved diaries of Herman Hoppe, a German engineer who built many of the tunnels.

4. Col di Lana

The largest mine blown on the Italian front literally destroyed half the mountain side of this strategic point in the Dolomite mountains. We explore trenches and tunnels and interview descendants of the Austrians and Italians who fought under and above this treacherous terrain.

5. Monte Paterno

A personal account of the tragic battles that unfolded amid the sharp gullies and ravines of the Dolomites, requiring men to perform the nearly impossible: excavate and tunnel through solid granite in freezing weather.