

Additional information about pigeons

Pigeons were used extensively in World War One, as they proved to be an extremely reliable way of sending messages. They were so important, that over 100,000 of them were used in the war, with an astonishing success rate of 95% getting through to their destination with their message

Messengers Their natural homing instinct meant that pigeons could find their way back to their handlers, even in the midst of a chaotic battle. At the battle of Marne in 1914, as the French troops advanced to push back the Germans, the soldiers took their pigeon lofts ('houses') with them. Many of the pigeons were 'on duty' during the battle, taking messages backwards and forwards from the trenches to French headquarters, but incredibly, every single bird made it back safely home, even though their lofts had moved forwards while they were flying.

The speed at which the birds could fly meant that it was nearly impossible to shoot them, so they were able to deliver messages safely and during the war saved many lives.



Morale The pigeon handlers took great care of their birds, which of course helped the men to focus on other things, rather than just the war. A returning pigeon with an important message would have been a very welcome sight to the whole regiment.

Additional information about pigeons

Pigeons were used extensively in World War One, as they proved to be an extremely reliable way of sending messages. They were so important, that over 100,000 of them were used in the war, with an astonishing success rate of 95% getting through to their destination with their message

Messengers Their natural homing instinct meant that pigeons could find their way back to their handlers, even in the midst of a chaotic battle. At the battle of Marne in 1914, as the French troops advanced to push back the Germans, the soldiers took their pigeon lofts ('houses') with them. Many of the pigeons were 'on duty' during the battle, taking messages backwards and forwards from the trenches to French headquarters, but incredibly, every single bird made it back safely home, even though their lofts had moved forwards while they were flying.

The speed at which the birds could fly meant that it was nearly impossible to shoot them, so they were able to deliver messages safely and during the war saved many lives.



Morale The pigeon handlers took great care of their birds, which of course helped the men to focus on other things, rather than just the war. A returning pigeon with an important message would have been a very welcome sight to the whole regiment.