

Journal #15



The Steeple of Albert Cathedral in Northern France.

Speculation was rife as to the supernatural reason for the suspension of Madonna and child.

Why do you suppose that many soldiers in World War One, especially on the Western Front, placed a high regard in fate and superstition? Think about their attitudes toward the war and whether they felt they had any control over events.

Letter

Robert Graves, in "Good-bye to all That"

Before an attack, the platoon pools all its available cash and the survivors divide it up afterwards. Those who are killed can't complain, the wounded would have given far more than that to escape as they have, and the unwounded regard the money as a consolation prize for still being here.

1. Define fatalistic.
2. Does the term apply to this situation? **EXPLAIN.**
3. Does what they are doing make sense to you? Would you do the same? **EXPLAIN.**

Vocabulary

Griffin: Confidential information or warning of trouble to come. The bottom line.

Landowner: Dead. To *become a landowner* was to be dead and buried.

Old Sweat: An experienced soldier.

Rest Camp: A cemetery.

San Fairy Ann: It doesn't matter, it makes no difference. From French *ça ne fait rien*.

Third Man: To go too far. The most popular superstition on the Western Front was that the third man to light his cigarette from the same match would inevitably be killed soon after. This was derived from the story that enemy snipers would, at night, use the flame of the match to find a target - the first light alerted the sniper, the second allowed him to aim, and the third time he fired.

Three Blue Lights: Something highly improbable. From a story that peace would be signaled by the firing of three dark blue signal flares, which would, of course, be invisible against the night sky.