LESSON FIVE

PRIMARY SOURCE ANALYSIS: WAR PHOTOGRAPHS

Primary Source Analysis: War Photographs

Primary sources, such as photographs, are a rich source of evidence for historians to examine and find out more about the period which they are studying.

**Task**

Examine each of the photographs below, taking particular note of their source lines, and answer the following questions for each of photographs A, B and C.

1. **Where** and **when** was the photograph taken?
2. **Who** or **what** is the subject of the photograph?
3. **Describe** what you see in the photograph.
4. **How reliable** is the source?
5. What is the significance or relevance of each photo? In terms of:
   a. the war to which it relates
   b. what differences, if any, it depicts between the three wars: World War I, World War II and the Vietnam War.
6. **How useful** is the source to a historian?

[NOTE: You may find it useful to write your answers to Questions 1 to 4 in a table and then answer Questions 5 and 6 in a paragraph each.]

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**A.**

Source: Huppy, France. 23 November 1918. Group portrait of the NCO’s 59th Battalion, Australian Infantry. (Australian War Memorial)
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B.

Source: Ernest Buckmaster, war artist, at work drawing a group of servicemen, World War II. (Australian War Memorial)

C.

Source: Vietnam, 1967. Soldiers pulling on a rope, enjoying a game of tug of war. (Australian War Memorial)