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OVER THERE

The Pictorial Chronicle of Chinese Laborer Corps in the Great War

# 万里赴戎机

第一次世界大战参战华工纪实

张建国 张军勇 编著

马向红 郭东波 译



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# 序

徐国琦

近一个世纪以前，第一次世界大战爆发，欧洲笼罩在一片血雨腥风之中。应募的数万华工从中国威海出发，飘洋过海，远赴欧洲，为拯救英国、法国和比利时的命运而出生入死。然而，他们去了，他们努力了，他们回来了，后来他们却被集体遗忘了。

在许多眼里，一战中抵达欧洲的十四万华工，也许只是苦力，在欧洲，他们确实也吃尽了苦，出尽了力。也许他们到欧洲的主要动机仅仅是为了谋生。但是，大而言之，他们是为了中国，为了世界。他们是中国放眼走向世界，主动加入国际社会的先行者。因为他们的存在，因为他们可歌可泣的旅欧经历，中国的外交官们可以在巴黎和会上，义正词严地要求国际社会还中国以公道。因为华工源源不断的到来，英法诸国在大战之危急关头，可以免去人力资源破产的后顾之忧。

一战时的中国还是幸运的，尽管积贫积弱、内忧外患，毕竟还有高瞻远瞩的志士仁人，在世界格局重新洗牌的转折关头，他们提出并实施了“以工代兵”策略，摆脱了被国际孤立的险境；更有吃苦耐劳的农民，他们赴汤蹈火，任劳任怨，扛起了挽转国运的重责大任。正是精英阶层与底层劳工的结合，才让中国得以在一战期间谱写了一曲中西交流的辉煌篇章，让欧洲得以一睹华工风采，让世界得以了解中华民族不屈不挠的坚强与智慧。

十四万华工还是幸运的。他们在人类历史的转折关头，因缘际会，挺身而出，得以成为中西历史的弄潮儿。“尔曹身与名俱灭，不废江河万古流。”20世纪末，一战华工的英名终于逐渐得到承认。法国政府正式立碑承认华工对法国的贡献。2008年秋，就在许多华工九十多年前跨出国门远赴欧罗巴的威海，经威海档案局精心策划与组织，多国学者济济一堂，探讨一战华工的历史。为配合首届一战华工国际学术会议的召开，威海档案局又同步举办了一战华工图片展览。呈现在读者面前的这本精美画册，就是这次展览的成果结晶。

我们希望借此画册，立此存照，再现被遗忘的一战华工之集体记忆，缅怀由他们所创造的一段人类共享的历史。我们也希望借此画册的出版，表达对一战华工姗姗来迟的感谢。不仅中国应该感谢他们，世界也应感谢他们。同时，我们还希望读者阅读此书时，能够体味新一代威海人和威海档案局的筚路蓝缕之功，以及他们在修复失去的历史记忆方面所做出的不懈努力。

2009春于美国哈佛大学瑞德克利福高级研究院



## Foreword

Xu Guoqi

Nearly a century ago, the First World War broke out. Europe and Western civilizations were facing a deadly challenge. Answering the call for help from France and Britain, many Chinese laborers went to Europe to support both countries' war effort. However, with the end of the war, the world seemed to have forgotten the great journey of these Chinese. Few in Europe and China today even know their story.

The 140,000 Chinese laborers were then considered by many as only coolies. The Chinese term for "coolies" consists of two characters, "ku" and "li", meaning bitterness and strength. Perhaps the Chinese term can better convey the meaning of their journey; they indeed suffered a great deal (ku). But they also demonstrated to the world both their physical and mental strength. Many of them went to France simply because they wanted to make a living or make money. But the impact of their journey goes beyond personal level. Their unprecedented journey to the West has a direct link to their helping save Western civilization and China's search for a new national identity. To put it differently, they not only got involved directly in making history in the West, moreover, they served as harbingers of China's progressive internationalization. Because of them, the Chinese diplomats were able to appeal to the world for China's equality at the post-war Paris peace conference. Because of them, France and Britain were able to avoid the embarrassment of bankruptcy of human resources in a total war.

Not only France and Britain were lucky to have them, to certain extent, was China lucky even during the First World War. It is true that China was then poor and weak and was facing many internal crises and external threats. But China was fortunate to have elite members who figured out a brilliant strategy to link the fate of China with the West: namely "using laborers as soldiers." During the First World War, the elite ideas for China's renewal and internationalization were carried out brilliantly by these laborers with their sacrifice and hard work. The elites and laborers together created a great chapter in the world history in fusions of East and Western civilizations. Through the "laborers as soldiers" plan, the world was able to witness that hundred of thousands

of Chinese worked side by side with the Westerners during the war; China also was able to demonstrate to the world its determination and wisdom for internationalization.

One can further argue that 140,000 Chinese laborers were lucky, too. They were fortunate to have the opportunity to play important roles in the crucial moments of Chinese and European history. Although long forgotten, now the world starts to pay attention to this unique group of the Chinese. In the 1990s, the French government openly acknowledged their contributions to the French history. In the fall 2008, the first international conference on Chinese laborers during the First World War took place at Weihai where many Chinese laborers started their historic journey to France. Weihai Municipal Archives served as an excellent host to this conference. At the same time, it organized a great photo exhibit on Chinese laborers in France during the Great War. This volume is based on that exhibit.

We hope this beautiful book will play some role in helping restore the long-forgotten historical memory of the Chinese laborers and help us to remember the shared history the Chinese took part in making with the West at the critical moment of the First World War. We also would like to use the volume as a small token of long delayed gratitude to these Chinese. After all, both China and the world have been in debt to them. Weihai Municipal Archives deserves gratitude from anyone who cares and studies the issue of Chinese laborers in France during the First World War. Largely thanks to its great effort to bring back the forgotten history to memory, we are able to have opportunity to read this volume.

Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, Harvard University

The spring of 2009

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# 前 言

办这样一个展览，盖因今年人类社会共同迎来的一个特殊时段——第一次世界大战结束90周年。

对于当代中国人而言，一战似乎只是西方列强间一场狗咬狗的厮杀而已，与己无关、遥不可及。然而，在那个弱肉强食、不争则亡的全球变局中，中国岂能偏安一隅，独善其身？为在列强的夹缝中求得生存，积贫积弱的中国也身不由己地卷入了那场万里之外的战争，并且有幸成了“战胜国”之一员，但今国人万万没有想到的是，中国在巴黎和会上蒙受的奇耻大辱，却比战败国犹有过之。极度的沮丧和义愤终于催生了轰轰烈烈的五四爱国运动，中国历史也从此掀开了崭新的一页……

中国到底是以怎样的方式加入那场战争的呢？下面便是我们要为您讲述的故事——14万华工在中国政府和协约国政府安排下，背井离乡、驰援欧洲的经历。故事的主人公都是普通人，是大历史中的小人物，是“沉默的大多数”，一如今天的你和我。



## Preface

Such an exhibition coincides with the 90th anniversary of the end of the First World War. For many contemporary Chinese, the WWI seems to be just a dogfight among the Western powers and have nothing to do with China at all. However, at such critical moment of mankind, how could China get away from the Great War? In order to survive in this dog eats dog world, the impoverished and weak China was involved in the European war thousands of miles away and eventually was lucky enough to become a member of the winning side. Unfortunately for the Chinese, their nation was subjected to even more outrageous insults than the defeated nations during Paris Peace Conference. Their extreme depression and indignation finally led to the vigorous patriotic May 4th Movement and a new page was thus opened in the history of China...

How did China participate in that war after all? This is the story we are going to tell you the experience of 140,000 Chinese laborers leaving China and rushing to rescue Europe under the arrangement of Chinese government and the governments of the Allies. All the protagonists in the story were common people, insignificant folks in the significant historical period and the "silent majority", just like you and I today.

## 一、欧洲的灯光正在熄灭

### The Lights are going out all over Europe

1914年8月至1918年11月，以奥匈帝国皇储弗朗茨·斐迪南夫妇在萨拉热窝遇刺身亡为导火索，西方两大军事集团——以德国、奥匈帝国为首的同盟国和以英、法、俄为核心的协约国之间爆发了一场史无前例的世界级大战。有30多个国家占当时全球2/3人口、近15亿人，卷入了这场绵延四年之久的战争，战火遍及欧洲、亚洲、非洲和大西洋、地中海以及太平洋等广大海域，死伤者达数千万人，战争规模及惨烈程度前所未有。

作为世界历史的转折点，一战揭开了20世纪人类大规模相互屠杀的序幕，不仅造成生灵涂炭、文明被毁，而且摧毁了由欧洲列强所主导的旧有国际秩序，开启了世界政治经济权力中心由欧洲向北美转移的进程，以苏俄为代表的社会主义运动和民族独立运动也由此兴起。正如战争初期英国外交大臣格雷伯爵所预言的“欧洲的灯光正在熄灭”那样，由欧洲列强独立地支配全球的时代将一去不返。

The assassination of both the Austro-Hungarian crown prince Franz Ferdinand and his wife in Sarajevo touched off an unprecedented war between the Central Powers headed by Germany and Austro-Hungary and the Allies headed by Britain, France and Russia from August 1914 to November 1918. More than 30 countries with almost 1.5 billion people of two-thirds of the global population were involved in the four-year-long war, spread over Europe, Asia and Africa, and large sea areas such as Atlantic, Mediterranean and even Pacific, resulting in tens of millions of the killed and wounded. The scale and cruelties of the war were unprecedented.

As a major turning point in the world history, the First World War raised the curtain on the large-scale human mutual massacre in the 20th century, which not only destroyed the civilization and plunged the people into misery and suffering, but also led to the collapse of the old international order dominated by the European Powers, and then initiated the transfer of global center of political and economic power from Europe to North America. The socialist movement and the national independent movement initiated by Soviet Union also rose from here. The era of European powers dominating the world had been gone for ever, just as the then British foreign secretary, Sir Edward Grey predicted at the time: "The lights are going out all over Europe".



弗利兹东部的德军战壕。战前欧洲所经历的空前的科技与工业发展成果充分应用到战争中，自动机枪等高杀伤武器的出现，催生出这种最主要的新式作战方法——壕战。

Continuous German trenches in the eastern part of Frise. The unprecedented technological and industrial developments in Europe were fully applied to the WWI and the emergence of automatic machine guns and other powerful antipersonnel weapons gave birth to such a major method of warfare - trench warfare.



坎提尼的法国坦克部队。打破壕战僵局的努力又催生出一系列新型大规模杀伤性武器，如1915年诞生的坦克。  
The French Tank Corps, Cantigny. A series of new weapons of mass destruction were produced to break the deadlock of trench war, such as the birth of tanks in 1915.

内尔森和汉姆之间被摧毁的铁路。铁路运输的出现,使军队远距离、大规模快速调动成为可能。陆军部署变得更为快捷,军队后勤需求也因之更为庞杂。The destroyed railway between Nesele and Ham. Railway transportation made it possible to mobilize large troops swiftly from far away, thus troops were deployed for battle more quickly and the military logistical service was accordingly more numerous and jumbled.



阿尔伯特地区被毁坏的教堂。战争让西方近代文明的弊病暴露无遗,惊醒了西方人自我沉醉的文明迷梦,甚至由此对和平的东方滋生出一种朦胧的羡慕。

The destroyed Church in Albert. The war had thoroughly exposed the shortcomings of modern Western civilization, awakening the West from their self-intoxicated dream of civilization. This even gave birth to their hazy envy of the eastern peace.





麦茨战役中被摧毁的村庄。战争让数以千计的城市和乡村成为废墟，大批工厂、铁路、桥梁和房屋被毁，最终损失约2700亿美元。

The devastated village in the campaign of Matz. The war devastated thousands of cities and villages, with a large number of factories, railways, bridges and houses destroyed, leading to the ultimate loss of about USD 270 billion.



饱受战争摧残的茅洛柏斯村庄一角。

A corner of the war-torn village of Maurepas



美军第一步兵师向法国索姆省的坎提尼发起进攻。战争初期美国中立，借机大做军火生意。双方两败俱伤时，又出面收拾残局。至战争结束，美国取代欧洲成为世界第一强国。

The 1st Infantry Division of U.S. launched an attack at Cantigny in Somme, France. U.S. declared neutral at the beginning of the war, making full use of this opportunity to do arms trade with both sides. However, it stood out to clean up the mess when both warring sides suffered heavily. By the end of the war, U.S. replaced Europe to become the most powerful nation in the world.



坎提尼战役中的美军士兵。作战，尤其是出国作战，人所畏惧，美国人更是如此。据说，一战时美国第一批征兵是通过抽签方式抽选的。

The soldiers of U.S. in the campaign of Cantigny Wars, particularly overseas wars, frightened all people, especially Americans. It is said that the first batch of draft of U.S. in WWI was made by drawing lots.



## 二、为什么不用中国人？他们干活不知道累

“Why not get Chinese?” “No work can tire Chinese out”

一战伊始，欧洲交战各国都满怀信心地期待着一场如同以往那样短暂而又胜利的战争，但不久他们便发现自己卷入了一场持久而残酷的战争折磨中。尽管作出种种牺牲、蒙受空前灾难，却依然看不到战争的尽头，西方文明面临着行将崩溃的生死考验。而随战争蔓延，双方用以维系战争并最终制胜的兵员锐减、劳力奇缺，难以为继。

“为什么不用中国人”？当英国驻法远征军军需总监埃里克·哥德斯为人力危机大伤脑筋时，军需部主管交通采购的欧内斯特·莫尔——一位有着中国经验的官员给出了这样的答案。事实上，当时考虑寻求外援的不仅是英国，还有法国和沙俄。而最终一致将目光投向中国，则不仅仅是因为中国人力资源巨大而廉价，更重要的是，在他们眼里，中国人“干活不知道累”。

At the beginning of the war, the European belligerent nations were fully confident that the war would be over quickly. However, they soon found themselves involved in a protracted and cruel war. Though making the sacrifice and suffering various disasters, it was still hard to see the end of the war, and the western civilization experienced the test of life and death. With the spread of the war, the troops of both sides suffered terrible losses, and the human resources got scarce, making the war hard to be sustained.

When Sir Eric Geddes, Quartermaster General of British Expeditionary Force in France, were fretting over the labor crisis, Ernest Moir, one quartermaster in charge of transport and supply, gave the answer “Why not get Chinese?” based on his experiences in China. In fact, Britain, France and Tsarist Russia were all considering seeking outside help at that time. Finally, all of them cast their eyes on China not only because China had enormous and cheap manpower, but more importantly, in their eyes, “no work can tire Chinese out”.



法军防化训练。在代表当时人类最高文明的欧洲人设下的战场上，德军首次在比利时伊波尔战役中大规模使用毒气，整个一战期间，中毒伤亡者达一百多万人。

Chemical defense training of French forces. The poison gas was firstly used on a large scale in the Ieper Battle, Belgium by the so-called most civilized Europeans. Throughout the Great War, most of which were used in the battle and resulted in the casualties of over 1 million.



巴赞亭战役中等待救护的德军伤员，1916年7月17日。本以为战争会很快结束而开赴前线的这些士兵，无论如何也不会料到等待他们的竟是如此残酷的命运。(IWM Q3976)

The wounded German soldiers waiting for medical care in the campaign of Bazentin Ridge, 17 July 1916. Those soldiers, who went to the front with the anticipation of a short war, never expected the cruel fate ahead of them.