Why were Freud and Jung's ideas accepted after the great war (WW1) when they were not before?

Psychoanalysis had become more internationally and scientifically accepted, even before the war. And the tens of thousands "shell-shocked" soldiers and veterans from the American Civil War ("Soldier Heart"), the Russo-Japanese War and Great War forced a change in psychiatric therapy.

"After the publication of Freud's books in 1900 and 1901, interest in his theories began to grow, and a circle of supporters developed in the following period. Freud often chose to disregard the criticisms of those who were skeptical of his theories, however, and even gained a few direct opponents as a result, the most famous being Carl Jung, who was originally in support of Freud's ideas."


"In 1908, Jung became editor of the newly founded Yearbook for Psychoanalytical and Psychopathological Research. The following year, Jung traveled with Freud and Sandor Ferenczi to the U.S. to spread the news of psychoanalysis and in 1910, Jung became chairman for life of the International Psychoanalytical Association."

"Shortly thereafter [1912], Jung again traveled to the U.S.A. and gave the Fordham lectures, which were published as The Theory of Psychoanalysis."

"In November 1912, Jung and Freud met in Munich for a meeting among prominent colleagues to discuss psychoanalytical journals."

"Jung and Freud personally met for the last time in September 1913 for the Fourth International Psychoanalytical Congress, also in Munich."


"In WWI, shell shock was considered a psychiatric illness resulting from injury to the nerves during combat. The horrors of WWI trench warfare meant that about 10% of the fighting soldiers were killed (note: 4.5% were killed during World War II) and the total proportion of troops who became casualties (killed or wounded) was 56%. Whether a shell-shock sufferer was considered "wounded" or "sick" depended on the circumstances. The large proportion of WWI veterans in the European population meant that the symptoms were common to the culture, although it may not have become popularly known in the US."
"The Russians in the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905) were the first to specifically diagnose mental disease as a result of war stress and try to treat it. It was not until WWI that the high level of cases with "shell shock" (also referred to as war neurosis and neurasthenia) really surprised commanders and doctors."

"In August 1916 Charles Myers was made Consulting Psychologist to the Army. He hammered home the notion that it was necessary to create special centres near the line using treatment based on:

- Promptness of action.
- Suitable environment.
- Psychotherapeutic measures."

"He also used hypnosis with limited success."

"The British government produced a "Report of the War Office Committee of Enquiry into 'Shell-Shock'" which was published in 1922. Recommendations from this included:"

"When cases are sufficiently severe to necessitate more scientific and elaborate treatment they should be sent to special Neurological Centres as near the front as possible, to be under the care of an expert in nervous disorders."

"Forms of treatment"

"The establishment of an atmosphere of cure is the basis of all successful treatment, the personality of the physician is, therefore, of the greatest importance. While recognising that each individual case of war neurosis must be treated on its merits, the Committee are of opinion that good results will be obtained in the majority by the simplest forms of psycho-therapy, i.e., explanation, persuasion and suggestion, aided by such physical methods as baths, electricity and massage. Rest of mind and body is essential in all cases."

"The committee are of opinion that the production of hypnoidal state and deep hypnotic sleep, while beneficial as a means of conveying suggestions or eliciting forgotten experiences are useful in selected cases, but in the majority they are unnecessary and may even aggravate the symptoms for a time. _They do not recommend psycho-analysis in the Freudian sense._"