

Conflict & Tension: The First World War 1894-1918

Part One: Causes

The MAIN long-term causes of the First World War:

If something is 'long-term' it occurs over a long period of time (decades or even centuries). Below are the long-term causes of the First World War. These were all things that were building tension in Europe before the war broke out in 1914.



M

Militarism is when a country builds an army to be the strongest. This leads to war because it build tension between countries and means that when an event triggers a war, countries will be more prepared for conflict. Militarism links to imperialism because countries need a strong military to conquer other countries. It also links to nationalism because countries feel really proud of their military.

A

An alliance is almost like a 'friendship' between countries. When countries form an 'alliance,' they agree to support one another in a time of conflict. The two main alliances in the First World War are called the Triple Alliance and the Triple Entente. The alliance system can cause tension and can turn a war between two countries into a 'world war.'

I



Imperialism is when a country take land abroad to build an empire. This can increase a countries wealth, power and influence. Imperialism increasing competition between countries which in turn, builds tension and envy.

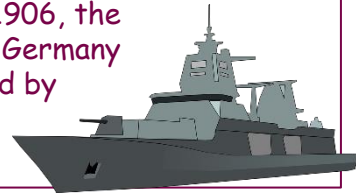
N

Nationalism is almost like an extreme patriotism. It is when people feel very proud of their country and feel that they are superior (better than other countries). This can lead to a war because countries might want to prove that they are the best. Furthermore, people who have nationalistic ideas, will do anything for their country. This might lead to some extreme actions that might have severe consequences (e.g. the Assassination).



The Arms Race (1897-1914): This is when the countries of Europe were competing to have the biggest and strongest military.

- **The Arms Race on land:** By 1870, the countries of Europe had spent over £90 million on the military between them, by 1914, that figure had risen to almost £400 million. Germany's spending alone had increased by 73%.
- **Military Plans:** The countries of Europe were highly suspicious of one another in the decades leading up to WW1. They were all making plans for what they would do if there was a war. For example, in 1897, Germany started formulating the Schlieffen Plan
- **Anglo-German Naval Race:** Britain's navy was the strongest in the world and the Kaiser wanted Germany's to be a close second. The Kaiser also wanted the German Empire to rival the British Empire, (Britain owned 25% of the world). In 1898, the Kaiser announced that he was building 41 new battleships. In 1906, the British unveiled the HMS Dreadnought, a superior battleship. Germany and Britain started to compete for the most Dreadnoughts and by 1914, Britain had 29 and Germany had 17. Germany was also building U-Boats.

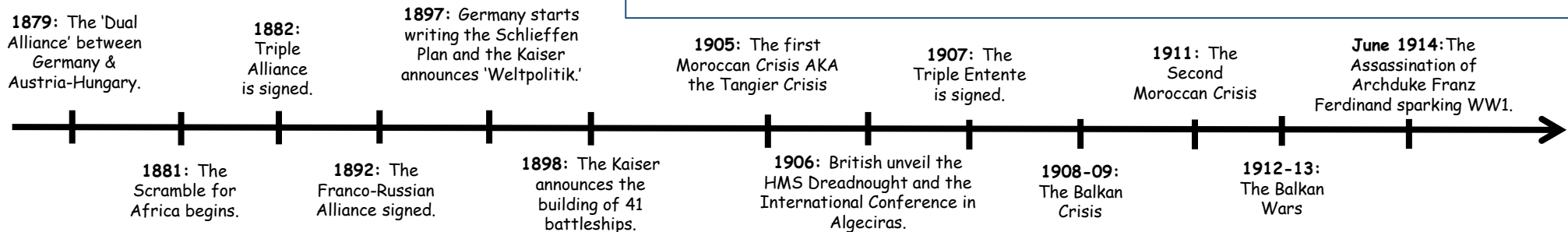


The Alliance System: By 1907, Europe was split into two main alliances.

Triple Alliance	Countries	Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy.	Triple Entente	Countries	Britain, France and Russia
	Date	1882		Date	1907
	Why?	Germany was threatened by the 'encirclement' & wanted to avoid fighting on two fronts.		Why?	Britain joined the existing Franco-Russian alliance in response to the growing power of Germany

Remember

On this paper, you need good specific evidence (dates, names, statistics). Use the timelines to revise these!

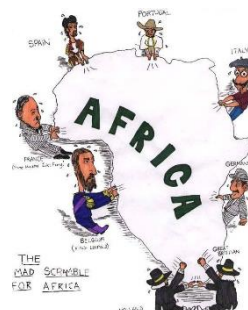


Conflict & Tension: The First World War 1894-1918

Part One: Causes

Imperialism and Africa

The Scramble for Africa: This was when countries in Europe were trying to take land in Africa for their empires. In 1870, only 10% of African land was under European control, but by 1914, it had risen to 90%. Building a large empire could give countries wealth, prestige and political influence. The largest empire in the world was the British Empire (25% of the globe) but the German Kaiser wanted to challenge this believing that Germany 'deserved a place in the sun.' The Scramble for Africa involved countries with existing empires like Britain, France and Spain but also newer countries without empires, like Italy. It created competition, jealousy and tension between countries.



The First Moroccan Crises: In 1904, Britain and France made a deal called the **Entente Cordiale** which said that Britain would support France in taking Morocco. The Kaiser travelled to Tangier to make it clear that he did not think that France should have Morocco. The Kaiser had three aims:

- 1) To see how far he could push the French- would they declare war on Germany?
- 2) To test the Entente Cordiale- were Britain and France really as strong as they appeared?
- 3) To prove that Germany was a strong country that is building a strong empire and should be involved in international issues.

Algeiras Conference: In January 1906, the international conference was held in Algeiras, Spain. The Kaiser was humiliated when it was ruled that France should have special rights over Morocco, although it was not yet formally part of the French Empire. Only Austria-Hungary supported the Germans, even Italy (their ally) did not. The Kaiser now saw that the bond between Britain and France was strong. In 1907, the **Triple Entente** was signed.

The Second Moroccan Crisis: In 1911, a rebellion broke out in Morocco. The Sultan (king) asked the French for help & the French sent 20,000 soldiers to fight the rebels. The Kaiser accused the French of invading Morocco and sent the German warship 'The Panther' to patrol the seas & show Germany's strength. The British saw this as a threat because they had a naval base in the area & started to prepare for a possible war with Germany.



Aftermath: The Kaiser backed down when he was given land in Africa as compensation and the French took Morocco. However, Britain and France had grown closer & recognised that Germany was a real threat. Britain began building more battleships. Furthermore, the Triple Alliance was weakened because the Kaiser questioned why Italy had not come to Germany's aid.

Background: The Balkans is made up of several countries. The Balkans used to be owned by the Turkish Empire (AKA the Ottoman Empire) but by the early 1900's they had become very weak. Countries in the Balkans started to rebel and some (e.g. Serbia) became independent. Large countries surrounding the Balkans (Russia & Austria-Hungary) saw this as an opportunity to take land for their empires.



The Balkans Crisis 1908-09

(Bosnian Crisis): Austria-Hungary had unofficially run Bosnia (owned by Turkey) for years. When there was a rebellion in Turkey, Austria-Hungary took advantage and annexed Bosnia, making it part of their empire. Nearby Serbia and Russia were angry and wanted to protect Bosnia because they were all Slavs. Russia called an international conference to discuss the problem. The Kaiser was unhappy about the annexing of Bosnia by Austria-Hungary but offered his support because they had supported him in Morocco. Russia backed down but tensions in the area grew, especially in Bosnia and Serbia.

The First Balkan War (October 1912- May 1913): The Balkan League attacked Turkey. The war only lasted 50 days but was very bloody. There was a peace conference in London in May & Turkey agreed to give up all of their land in Europe. They had lost the war. Albania became independent & all other land was shared amongst the countries of the Balkan League. However, soon after the King of Bulgaria thought that he should have gotten more land & declared war on Greece and Serbia.

The Second Balkan War (June-August 1913): Turkey and Romania joined the war against Bulgaria, hoping to get land. Bulgaria lost all of the land had been won in the First Balkan War.

Aftermath: Nationalism in Serbia started to grow. They hated Austria-Hungary and wanted to take all of their land in the Balkans to make one united Slav nation called 'Greater Serbia.' Bosnia supported this. Austria-Hungary felt Serbia needed to be dealt with.

The Balkan League: This was made up of Greece, Serbia, Bulgaria and Montenegro and their aim was to drive the Turks out of the Balkans for good. Russia supported the League because they felt that a strong Slav group in the area would stop Austria-Hungary from wanting to take more land there.

Trouble in the Balkans

Conflict & Tension: The First World War 1894-1918

Part One: Causes

The Assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand (June 28th 1914): Franz Ferdinand was the heir to the Austrian-Hungarian Empire, his uncle Franz Josef was the current leader. He had travelled to Sarajevo (Bosnia) to show that he intended on improving the relationship between Austria-Hungary and Bosnia. However, the Serbian nationalist group, the Black Hand Gang had sent seven assassins to Sarajevo to kill him. Their aim was to unite with Bosnia and create a country called 'Greater Serbia.' Austria-Hungary had also been testing military weapons on the border between Bosnia and Serbia, which the Black Hand saw as a threat. The first assassination attempt failed but the Archduke was later shot by 19-year old **Gavrilo Princip** who wanted to become a martyr for Serbia.

The Aftermath: Austria-Hungary discovered that Serbia was behind the attack and, with the support of Germany, gave them a list of demands. They said that Serbia must take full responsibility for the murder and that Austro-Hungarian police should be allowed to enter Serbia and get rid of nationalist groups like the Black Hand Gang. Serbia was given 48 hours to agree to this ultimatum. This is called **the July Crisis**. Serbia accepted all of the demands except the one that stated that Austro-Hungarian police be allowed into Serbia. He was worried that this would mean that Austria-Hungary would have control over Serbia. Austria-Hungary responded by declaring war on Serbia, which **triggered the alliance system (see timeline)**



28th June 1914: Archduke Franz Ferdinand is assassinated by the Serbian Black Hand Gang in Sarajevo.

29th July 1914: Russia began to mobilize and goes to Serbia's aid because they were both Slav's and allies.

1st August: The Tsar refuses to stop his preparations so Germany declares war on Russia. Russia's ally, France, prepares for war.

3rd August: Germany starts moving through neutral Belgium, breaking the Treaty of London. Britain sends a message telling Germany to retreat.

July 28th 1914: Following the July Crisis, Austria-Hungary declare war on Serbia, bombing the capital, Belgrade.

30th July 1914: Kaiser Wilhelm asks his cousin, Tsar Nicholas (Russia) to stop preparing his troops.

2nd August 1914: Germany start to enact the Schlieffen Plan, moving their troops towards France.

August 4th: The Germans are still moving through Belgium. At 11pm, Britain declares war on Germany.

The Alliance System had turned a conflict between two countries into the first ever 'world war'!

Britain's 'Splendid Isolation': This is when Britain was focusing on their own growth and Empire. Britain felt as though they were strong enough alone and did not need economic or military allies. The British Empire was the largest in the world (25% of the globe) but Britain needed a strong navy to defend it. In 1889 Britain made a law that included something called the 'two-power standard.' This means that the British Royal Navy needed to be at least equal in size and strength to the next two largest navies (France and Russia). The British government made £20 million available to build new warships in order to protect the Empire.

What changed? Europe started to split into two alliances in the early 1900's and the Kaiser began to talk about making Germany a 'world power.' Britain started to feel as though their Empire was at risk, this was made worse when Germany supported the Boers (a group who were living in a British colony) in their rebellion against the British (1899-1902). When the Triple Entente was signed in 1907, Britain was longer in 'Splendid Isolation.'

Weltpolitik: This means 'World Policy' and is the name of the Kaiser's plan to make Germany a world power by expanding her empire. In order to grow the Empire, the Kaiser needed a stronger army and navy so he raised taxes to expand Germany's military.



Above: A source showing the Kaiser taking a bite out of the globe.

Left: A source showing the triggering of the Alliance System in 1914 (The countries in order: Serbia, Austria-Hungary, Russia, Germany, France and Britain).

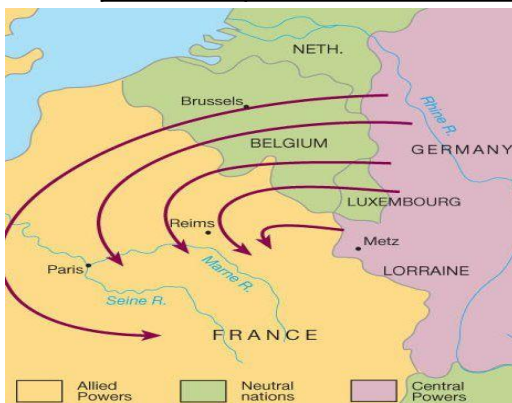
Conflict & Tension: The First World War 1894-1918

Part Two: Stalemate

The Schlieffen Plan

The Schlieffen Plan: The military plan of what Germany would do if there ever was a war in Europe.

Why was the Plan needed?	Germany was afraid of 'encirclement.' This means that Germany was surrounded by her enemies, with Russia to the East and France to the West. If war broke out, Germany would have to split her army in two to fight the French and Russians on either side, this would make Germany weaker.
What was the Plan?	It was formulated by Von Schlieffen , the leader of the Germany army, in 1897, finished in 1905 and revised in 1906. It said that the German army would surprise the French by entering through neutral Belgium and not through Alsace-Lorraine (Germany owned Alsace-Lorraine so France thought that they would move through it). This is shown on the map below. The German army would then capture Paris and defeat the French before the Russians could get there. The Russian army was large but slow and the Germans estimated that it would take them around six weeks to mobilize. The whole plan relied on the swift defeat of France,
Why did it fail?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The German's underestimated the Belgians and it took them longer to move through the country than they initially thought.It took the Russians 10 days to mobilize rather than six weeks.By moving through neutral Belgium, the Germans had broken the Treaty of London (1839). Britain told them to retreat and when they refused, Britain declared war on Germany and started to mobilize the BEF (British Expeditionary Force) to assist the French.



Trench Life

Positives	Negatives
<ul style="list-style-type: none">It was much safer to be in a trench than above ground.There was a strong comradery (brotherhood) between the soldiers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Trench foot due to the mud.Diseases like Trench Fever.Rats.Lice.Boredom.Being away from family and friends.Shell Shock (PTSD)When you're told to go 'over the top' there was a high chance that you would die.

The Battle of the Marne

Late August 1914: The Germans reach the River Marne, they are weak and Hungry but only 40km from capturing Paris. However, the General von Kluck (German commander) had sent 100,000 troops to fight the Russians in the East and the remaining German troops were weak and tired.

6TH September 1914: British and French troops attacked the Germans from the West, forcing von Kluck to turn to fight them. As he did so, he opened up a massive gap in the German troops. The British and French were able to move into this gap and attack. The German's had to retreat and dig trenches to defend themselves.

12TH October 1914: **The Race to the Sea.** The war had come to a stalemate with neither side making any gains. The Germans decided to try to get to the British Channel to capture ports & stop aid from getting into France & Belgium, therefore weakening the allied armies.

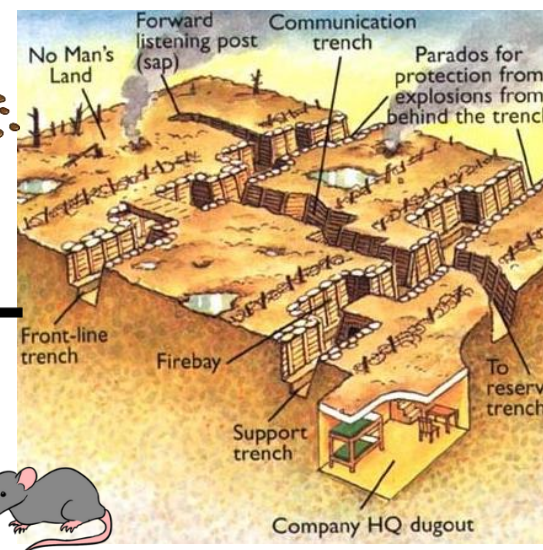
November 1914: The war was still a stalemate, both sides had dug trenches, forming what became known as the 'Western Front.' The BEF had been completely decimated and one million French soldiers were already dead.

The Eastern Front: The 100,000 troops were sent to the Eastern Front to fight the Russians alongside Austro-Hungarian forces. **The Russian army was huge and was nicknamed the 'steam-roller.'** However, the Russians were poorly equipped and had bad leaders. **The German army was superior, leading to German victories in early Battles on the Eastern Front (Tannenberg and Masurian Lakes)**

Trenches

The Trench System:






- To begin with, trenches were just holes in the ground that gave the soldiers shelter from gunfire. However, they soon developed to become much more advanced (see left).
- The trenches were protected by sandbags, barbed wire & machine guns.
- The area between allied trenches & the enemy trenches was called 'No Man's Land' because it was so dangerous.
- Trenches were often built in a zig-zag pattern for two reasons: 1) So that they would not 'cave in' as easily if the trenches were bombed and 2) So that enemy soldiers could not fire straight down the trenches if they did manage to get into the trench.
- There were different types of trenches and quality would vary. For example, the German's had more advanced trenches with larger dugouts that provided underground shelter for more soldiers and some even had electricity. This is because the German generals realised that their soldiers would be in the trenches for a long time. The French and British had more basic trenches because they thought that the War would not last long.



Conflict & Tension: The First World War 1894-1918

Part Two: Stalemate

Trench Technology and Weaponry

Weapon	About
 Artillery	Huge guns that could fire shells (bombs) long distance. It was used to 'soften up' the enemy before an attack by bombarding their trenches for hours. Artillery was heavy and required several men to operate.
Machine Guns	These were effective because they could fire up to 10 bullets per second. However, they took several men to operate and could overheat easily, meaning they would need to be cooled down with water.
Grenades	Small, handheld bombs that could be thrown into enemy trenches. 
Gas Attacks	Poison gas was first used in 1915. Different types of gas included tear gas and mustard gas. It caused slow, painful death, however, if the wind changed, the gas could change direction.
 Rifles	All soldiers were given one. They were light, accurate and could shoot up to 600m. They could shoot between 15 & 20 bullets per minute. However, they needed to be reloaded and could 'clog up' with mud which would cause them to stop working until they were cleaned.
Bayonets	A 40cm knife that was attached to the end of the rifle. It could be used to stab the enemy in close combat. Due to the nature of trench warfare, they were rarely used.
Flame-throwers	These could create a wall of fire that could reach 15m. These would be really dangerous in small spaces (e.g. a dugout). 
 Tanks	Bullet-proof vehicles that could be driven across No Mans land, crushing barbed wire and reach enemy trenches. They were first used by the British in 1916 but could only travel 5mph and would brake down easily. As technology developed, tanks improved and by WW2 they were very effective.



Key Battles: Verdun

Date: 21st February to 18th December 1916.
Place: The hills near Verdun, North-eastern France.
Other info: The longest battle of WW1.

The Plan	Verdun was a German attack, planned by the commander of the German Army, General Eric Von Falkenhayn . He chose Verdun because it was a very important historic French city and he knew that the French would do anything to protect it. It was also the strongest city in France and a symbol of French pride . Falkenhayn said that he wanted to ' bleed the French white ', meaning that he wanted to kill as many Frenchmen as possible. This is an example of ' a war of attrition ,' which is when you wear the enemy away slowly to the point of collapse.
The Battle	At 7:15am on the 21 st February, the German artillery began shelling the French trenches. That day, 2 million shells were fired by 1400 guns. That afternoon, Prince Wilhelm, the Kaiser's son attacked about 200,000 French soldiers. The next day, the French retreated (moved back) into their reserve trenches. By the 24 th , they had been forced into a third line of trenches that was just 8km from Verdun. It was looking bad for the French. The leader of the French army, General Joffre decided that his only option was to try to kill as many German's as possible. He ordered every spare French soldier to Verdun, in total 259/330 French regiments fought at the Battle. By early March, the German advance had slowed down, with them only advancing another 3km. In April, the French began their counterattacks. This was the pattern- one side would attack and then the other would counterattack. In late June, the German's took one of the city's large forts. The Battle slowed down when then British launched an attack at the Somme because the German's needed to send some of their troops to fight there.
The Aftermath	23 million shells had been fired, Verdun had been destroyed and 315,000 French soldiers had been killed. The Germans had lost 280,000 men. The farmland around the city was declared a 'Red Zone' because of the amount of unexploded bombs and nine villages were destroyed. The French did not rebuild them and left them as memorials known as 'the villagers that died for France.' The French saw themselves as the winners, however, neither side made any real military gains.

Key Battles: The Battle of the Somme

Date: 1st July to 18th November 1916.
Place: Near the River Somme, Northern France.
Other info: The largest battle of WW1.

The Plan	The Somme was a British and French plan to take pressure off of the French troops in Verdun, break the stalemate and end the war. The leader of the British forces was General Douglas Haig. The plan was to bombard the German trenches for on week using artillery. Once the Germans were weakened and the barbed wire destroyed, the British and French troops would walk in a straight line across No Man's Land and seize the German Trenches.
The Battle	On 24 th June 1916, British and French artillery began bombarding the German trenches. 1.5 million shells were fired in eight days. However, the German reconnaissance (spy planes) had uncovered the Plan which gave the German's enough time to build an extra line of trenches to keep their men and weapons safe. They also built dugouts deep underground for added protection. To make matters worse, the British shells were poor quality and 1/3 did not explode at all. Finally, the barbed wire in front of the German trenches was not destroyed. British reconnaissance had warned Haig about the failure of the plan but he ignored the warnings and ordered the British soldiers to go 'over-the-top.' 20,000 men were killed on the first day of the Battle, many of them within the first 20 minutes. Haig continued to send soldiers 'over-the-top' throughout the Summer, which resulted in heavy losses.
The Aftermath	Some minor gains were made by the British and French (a strip of land 25km long and 6km wide). The allies had lost 620,000 men and the German's 500,000. Haig was widely criticised and called 'the Butcher of the Somme' in the press. Some historians agree that the failure of the Battle was Haig's fault but others believe that other leaders would have made similar mistakes because this was the first war that used trench warfare on this scale.

Conflict & Tension: The First World War 1894-1918

Key Battles: Passchendaele

Date: July to November 1917

Place: Near Ypres, Belgium.

Other info: The muddiest battle of WW1.

Background: In the Spring of 1917, several attacks were planned by the allies to break through the German lines. On 9th April, the British had attacked the Germans near Arras, France & had successfully pushed them back several kilometres. Canadian troops (British Empire) also successfully captured Vimy Ridge, a high hill near Arras. However, the Germans called for reinforcements & stopped the British advance.

In the South, the French had attacked the Germans in the Neville Offensive. The plan failed when the French were cut down by machine gun fire and could not break through the German Army's concrete defences. Afterwards, French soldiers staged a mutiny (refused to follow orders).

The British attacked once more in the North at Messines where miners had been digging under a 140m high hill for two years. They packed this hill with explosives which were detonated on 7th June 1917. This was a success for the British and the German's were pushed back further.



The Plan	British troops (including troops from her Empire) were fighting the German's for control of the hills around the Belgian city of Ypres. Encouraged by the success at Messines, Haig ordered British troops towards the Belgian city of Ypres, he was hoping for a quick success so that the allies could move on to capture Belgian ports which were being used by the German's as submarine bases. Furthermore, America had just joined the War and Russia was about to leave so Haig felt as though this was the right time to launch this attack.
The Battle	Haig ordered a ten-day artillery bombardment on 18 th July. 4.5 million shells were launched from 3,000 guns. The area had seen the heaviest rainfall in 30 years and the ground was waterlogged. The shellfire made this worse and turned the ground into thick, deep mud. When the attack began on 31 st July, soldiers had to lay down wooden planks in order to move across the battlefield. If they fell off the planks, they could sink in the mud and drown. Soon, the mud began to stick due to the decaying bodies of soldiers and horses.
The Aftermath	In total, 400,000 British soldiers were killed or injured and the German's lost 300,000 men. The artillery bombardment had failed to destroy German positions and by early November, after the village of Passchendaele was captured, the Battle was called off. Haig's reputation was further destroyed.

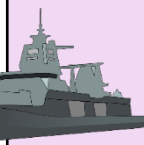


Key Battles: Gallipoli

Date: February 1915

Place: The Gallipoli Peninsula, near Turkey.

Other info: Fought in the East and was the first major battle that included ANZAC forces.



The Plan	The British were trying to gain control of the Dardanelles to get supplies to Russia. However, the area was controlled by Turkey who was fighting on the side of Germany after the Kaiser had offered to help strengthen the Turkish army in return. Winston Churchill, the leader of the Royal Navy also hoped that an attack in this area would distract the Germans and force them to send troops from the Eastern and Western Fronts, which would weaken them. Finally, Churchill hoped that nearby countries such as Greece, Bulgaria and Romania would see the defeat of Turkey and join the war on the side of the Triple Entente, leaving Austria-Hungary surrounded. They would achieve all of this by capturing the Dardanelles swiftly and sailing up to take the Turkish capital, Constantinople. Churchill saw the Turks as weak, therefore he was convinced that the British Navy could beat them easily and that a land attack was not necessary.
The Battle	 The plan was split into three phases: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) 19th February 1915: British and French ships began to sail down the Dardanelles and capture Turkish Forts. They also used minesweepers to get rid of the mines (underwater bombs) that the Turks had planted in the water.2) 18th March: Eighteen large battleships were sent into the Dardanelles, supported by smaller warships and minesweepers. However, they were met by Turkish shellfire and a new line of mines sank three ships and seriously damaged three more. The twelve remaining ships retreated.3) Churchill was told by naval commanders that they would not be able to capture the Turkish forts without a land attack. Churchill agreed and appointed General Ian Hamilton to lead a land attack using 70,000 soldiers, even though Greece had warned that they would need at least 150,000. The invasion began on the 25th April and allied troops consisted mainly of ANZAC soldiers.  Problems began when the Turks found out about the land invasion and were able to gather 84,000 soldiers and place them on the clifftops overlooking the beaches. The allied forces attacked five beaches but only three attacks were successful. On the other two beaches, thousands of ANZAC soldiers were gunned down as they left their boats. The ANZAC soldiers were forced to dig trenches in order to defend themselves. Due to the heat, the soldiers in the trenches did not have enough water and around 80% caught dysentery (severe sickness and diarrhoea). In August, 60,00 British troops were sent to drive the Turks out of Gallipoli but were unsuccessful.
The Aftermath	 The Gallipoli Campaign was a failure. Bulgaria joined on the side of Germany, Churchill resigned and his reputation was damaged, 200,000 allied troops and 300,000 Turkish troops were killed and Russia remained short of supplies. However, the Turks were not able to help Germany or Austria-Hungary because they were busy defending themselves. Furthermore, no troops died in the evacuation and some Turkish warships and supply ships were sunk by the British near Constantinople which weakened Turkey overall.

Conflict & Tension: The First World War 1894-1918

Part Two: Stalemate

War in the Air

Aeroplane Technology: When war broke out, planes had only been in the air for around 10 years. They were slow, clumsy and could not accurately drop bombs on a target. Initially, planes were used for reconnaissance, or spying on the enemy and gathering information about their plans. However, during the war, aeroplane technology developed to include the following:

Plane	Description
Fighter Planes	Enemies would fight each other in the air in Fighter Planes. At first, they fired hand-held pistols and even threw bricks at each other but later machine guns were attached to the front of the planes, making them more effective. These 'battles' were called 'dogfights.'
Bomber Planes	These could be used to drop bombs on the enemy. At first, they could only drop small bombs that the pilots had to drop out of the side of the plane. However, by 1917, the Germans had developed the 'Gotha' bomber which could fly longer distances and effectively bomb enemy cities. Hundreds were killed in London and the British responded by developing the 'Handley Page' bomber and dropped bombs on German cities.
Airships or Zeppelins	Airships were used for reconnaissance and bombing. The German's developed 'Zeppelins' which were about 200m long and could carry 27 tons of bombs. They bombed British towns and killed 564 people. The use of Zeppelins declined when planes became more advanced and could easily shoot them down.



War at Sea

The Naval Blockade: During WW1, it was important to control the seas for two reasons:

- 1) You can make sure that any supplies that you need from abroad can get to your country easily.
- 2) You can block supplies from getting to your enemy & starve them out of the war. This tactic is known as a naval blockade.

Britain is an island, meaning that supplies can enter the country from any direction, making a blockade challenging for Germany. However, Germany has one coastline in the North, meaning that Britain found it quite easy to successfully blockade them. They stopped coal, weapons, food and medicine from getting into Germany. The German people began to starve and stopped supporting the Kaiser and the War (anti-war protests began in 1915). Despite the efforts of the German Navy, the British Navy had the advantage and successfully patrolled the seas for the first two years of the war whilst the German ships were forced to stay in their ports. In May 1916, the German's changed their approach and attempted to gain control of the seas. This is the Battle of Jutland.



Above: A map showing the naval blockade of Germany. Remember, Germany also had Russia on one side and France on the other so was left with no open borders.

Key Battle: Jutland

Date: May 1916

Place: Jutland near Denmark, the North Sea



The Plan	The leader of the German Navy, Admiral Scheer, wanted to take control of the seas. His plan was to send a small group of German ships, led by Admiral Hipper, into the North Sea as bait. The British would chase these ships and attack them. Then, the rest of the German fleet would surround the British and attack them.
The Battle	Admiral Scheer enacted his plan on 31 st May. However, the British had cracked the German codes and could understand the secret messages that they were sending which allowed them to discover their plans. The British sent a small fleet of ships, led by Admiral Beatty to meet Hipper's small German fleet. They opened fire and five British ships were destroyed before Scheer arrived with the rest of the German fleet. Soon after, the remainder of the British fleet arrived and the German's began sailing North. The British decided not to follow them but try to catch up with the German fleet on their way home. The two sides opened fire at one another twice more and eventually the German's fled.
The Aftermath	The German's claimed that they had won the Battle because they had sunk more British Ships (14 compared to 9 German ships) and killed more men (6100 compared to 2550 German deaths). However, the British also claimed victory because the German's fled the Battle first. The German's also failed to end the British blockade and their ships stayed in the port for the rest of the War.

The German U-Boat Campaigns: While the German battleships were docked in the ports, they became more and more reliant on U-Boats. These are underwater submarines that fire torpedoes to sink enemy ships. The German's announced something called 'unrestricted submarine warfare' which is when they promised to sink any ship that was taking supplies to Britain. The British responded by planting underwater mines to blow up the U-Boats and developing Q-Boats which were warships disguised as supply ships. The German U-Boat would approach the Q-Boat in order to sink it and the Q-Boat would transform and fire at the U-Boat. However, the German U-Boat campaign was fairly successful, sinking an average of two British supply ships per week and stopping thousands of tons of supplies from reaching Britain. In February 1917 the German's launched their 'second U-Boat' campaign, sending over a hundred U-Boats into British waters. 500 ships were sunk within eight weeks and Britain had six weeks worth of food left which forced them to introduce rationing. In the Summer of 1917, the British developed the 'Convoy System' which was when supply ships sailed closed together surrounded by warships for protection. This was so effective that in July 1917, only five out of eight-hundred supply ships were sunk.

Conflict & Tension: The First World War 1894-1918

Part Three: The End

Russia's Exit

Towards the start of the War, the Russians won some important Battles, however, lack of good equipment and poor leaderships led to some important defeats in the Battles of Tannenberg and the Masurian Lakes. The Russian Tsar travelled to the front to lead the Russian Army, leaving his wife, the Tsarina in charge. She had developed a controversial relationship with a monk named Rasputin which made her very unpopular with the Russian people who were beginning to lose faith in the Royal Family.

To make matters worse, 15 million men had been sent to war, meaning that there was no one left to do important jobs like grow the crops, work in the factories or coalmines. This led to food shortages, the Russian railway system had collapsed due to the extra demand and there were power cuts due to lack of fuel. By 1916, over a million Russians had been killed in combat.

In early 1917, riots broke out on the streets of Russia. The Tsarina ordered the Russian soldiers to fight the protesters but they refused and joined them. Soldiers on the front lines also refused to fight. The soldiers set up their own council called the 'Petrograd Soviet' and organised **the Revolution**. When the Tsar returned in March, he was forced to abdicate (step down). In July, he and his whole family were killed.

A temporary government took charge and promised the people that they would hold elections and give more land to the peasants. They also ordered a new attack on Germany in July 1917. When the Russians were defeated once again, the people were furious and more soldiers deserted the cause. The Germans snuck a man named **Lenin** (he had been exiled by the Tsar) back into Russia where he managed to gather his supporters (**the Bolsheviks**) and take control of Russia in a second revolution.

In March 1918, Lenin signed the **Brest-Litovsk Treaty** with Germany & its allies. As a consequence, Russia lost a lot of quality farmland and natural resources but they had now **officially exited the War**. The British and French were furious because Germany now had an advantage because they could pull all of their troops from the Eastern front & send them to the Western Front. Germany was no longer fighting on two fronts.



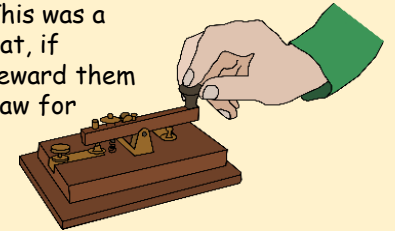
America's Entrance

When the war began in 1914, America vowed to remain neutral. They were practicing **isolationism**, which is when they focus on themselves and do not get involved in international issues. However, America did sell weapons, food and other goods to Britain throughout the War, meaning that America was financially involved.

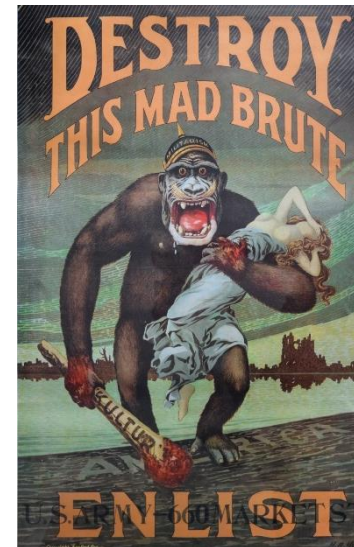


May 1915: A German U-Boat sank British passenger liner the Lusitania which was sailing from New York to Liverpool. Over 1000 passengers, including 128 Americans, drowned. Germany claimed the ship was carrying weapons. This caused a lot of tension between the U.S. & Germany, although it would be two years before they joined the war. Following the sinking of the Lusitania, German U-Boat attacks stopped, however, by 1917, the Germans unleashed 'unlimited submarine warfare' on U.S. supply ships in an attempt to starve Britain and France out of the War.

March 1917: The Americans intercepted the Zimmerman Telegram. This was a coded message being sent from Germany to Mexico. The Germans said that, if Mexico joined them and helped to defeat America, then Germany would reward them with the states of Texas, New Mexico and Arizona. This was the final straw for America and they officially entered the war in April 1917, bringing with them money, weapons and fresh troops that had not been battered by three years in the trenches. This was devastating for Germany.



Right: An American army recruitment poster from 1917. The ape represents Germany. He is holding a bloody club that says 'Kultur,' meaning culture and is carrying a distressed woman away. This is a piece of propaganda that is designed to instill fear in the American people and show them that Germany is ruthless and will do terrible things in America if they win the War.



Above: A French cartoon from 1917 showing the sinking of the Lusitania and the U.S. entering the War.

Conflict & Tension: The First World War 1894-1918

Part Three: The End

Developments in Technology and Tactics

Weapons	How did it develop/improve?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Special shells were developed that could cut through barbed wire.The 'creeping barrage' was developed. This is when a row of artillery rolls slowly, firing shells with soldiers on foot behind. It acts as a protective curtain and fewer men die.Anti-aircraft guns were developed that could shoot enemy planes out of the sky.Guns became bigger and more accurate.Mine warfare developed. This is when tunnels were built by miners and explosives were packed under the enemies trenches before being detonated.
Tactics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">At the beginning of the war troops would bombard the enemy before sending their men 'over-the-top' to attack. However, towards the end of the war they changed this tactic and started sending an elite team of specialist soldiers out first, armed with machine guns, grenades and flamethrowers. Then, the main attack would follow. They tried doing this quickly to begin with, but found that fewer men died when they tried sneaking towards the enemy slowly.
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Before the Ludendorff Spring Offensive, the allies decided to appoint a 'commander-in-chief (General Foch)' who would organise all of the allied troops (British, French and American) against the Germans. This allowed for better communication & was called a 'unified command structure.'

Ludendorff's Spring Offensive

Date: March-July 1918

Place: Near Arras, France.

The Plan	General Ludendorff (Germany) planned to attack allied troops near Arras, France because the trenches were poorly constructed and he thought it was a weak point. He decided to attack in the Spring of 1918 because Russia had just left the War and the U.S.A had not yet reached the Western Front, meaning that Britain and France were at their weakest. This was supposed to be the final push that would lead Germany to victory. He planned to start the attack with a five-hour artillery bombardment known as 'hurricane bombardment' before sending in his specially trained stormtroopers to make the enemy panic. He would then order his troops to attack the gaps in the allied lines and surround the British, forcing them to surrender. The French would also surrender because they could not fight without the British.
The Battle	The 'hurricane bombardment' began at 4:40am on 21 st March 1918. One million shells were fired from 6,000 German guns making it the heaviest bombardment of the whole War. The Germans then released mustard gas and sent out the stormtroopers. The British were outnumbered and by the end of the first day 20,000 British soldiers were dead, 35,000 wounded and 21,000 were taken prisoner. This attack is significant because it broke the stalemate and the Germans had made gains and, at this stage, the allies were in a bad situation. The Germans kept pushing forward and seemed unstoppable but there were three problems. Firstly, they did not have enough reserve soldiers to replace those lost. Secondly, they have moved deep into France too quickly meaning that they could not get vital supplies, such as food, to their troops. Finally, the American troops began to arrive (50,000 new men per week). The allied troops decided to improve communication by putting all of their troops under the control of one man, General Foch. He ordered a counter-attack by ordering his troops to attack the German lines from all angles. Ludendorff ordered one final attack on 15 th July but it failed.
The Aftermath	This was the last major German attack of the war. Germany had lost around 500,000 men and the arrival of the American troops had given the allies a clear advantage, allowing them to launch their own attack- the Hundred Days.

The Hundred Days

Date: August 1918

Place: The Western Front

The Plan	After the Ludendorff Offensive, the allies began to plan their own attack. It was intended to be final attack that would bring them victory. The arrival of the American troops had boosted morale amongst the troops and the 'united command structure' under General Foch had improved communication. This allowed them to plan smaller, more accurate attacks all along the German lines that would eventually wear the enemy down to breaking point. British, French, Belgian, and other troops would attack the Germans in the North and French and American troops would attack in the East.
The Battle	On the 8 th August 1918, attacks began at Amiens. British, Australian and Canadian troops used 400 tanks to break through the German lines, taking 11km. Over the next week, a further 8km was taken and the Germans began to retreat. General Ludendorff said that it was 'a black day for the German Army' because 30,000 men were killed, 17,000 were taken prisoner and 300 guns were seized. Allied forces also captured several other cities and towns in a series of battles known as 'the Second Battle of the Somme.' As the allies moved forward, the Germans were forced back to a line of concrete trenches called 'the Hindenburg Line.' In September, French and American troops launched an attack on the Hindenburg line in which 26,000 U.S soldiers were killed. Two days later, the Belgian, British and French troops attack near Ypres, Belgium and other allied troops attacked at other points along the German lines. By October, the Germans had no choice but to retreat (run away) burning bridges, destroying roads and poisoning wells as they went to try and slow the enemy down.
The Aftermath	The allies had made considerable gains and had broken the German lines once and for all. German military leaders began to accept that the War should be ended and that they should surrender.

Conflict & Tension: The First World War 1894-1918

The Home Fronts

The 'Home front' is the name given to civilians that stayed at home during the War but still contributed to the War effort. At the start of the War, people all over Europe were excited and felt like their country would win. However, as the years went on and more soldiers died, this enthusiasm died down.

Below: A table showing the total cost of the War

	Total sent to War	Killed or died	Wounded
Allied Powers	42,188,810	5,142,631	12,800,706
Central Powers	22,850,000	3,386,200	8,388,448

What changed on the home fronts during the War?

- Civilians were victims of bomb attacks (e.g. Zeppelins)
- The soldiers needed huge supplies of weaponry and ammunition (bullets, shells) so factories had to adapt in order to make them. In Germany and Britain, the government took over all factories, mines and railroads to use them in the production & transportation of munitions.
- With the men away at War, women had to go to work. They went to work in traditionally 'male' workplaces such as factories, shipyards & in the emergency services.
- Most countries had food shortages because their enemy was trying to 'starve them out.' With basic goods in short supply, prices went up., This had a huge impact on Germany due to the naval blockade, The German winter of 1916-17 was called the 'Turnip Winter' because turnips were the only food available. The blockade lasted until July 1919, when a peace agreement called the 'Treaty of Versailles' was signed which decided Germany's punishments.
- Land was destroyed & two million people were made homeless. France was the most affected because much of the fighting took place there. 750,000 homes, 20,000 factories and 48,000km of land was destroyed in France.
- Many civilians began to feel anger towards their leaders. There were revolutions in Russia (1917) & Germany (1918), meaning that civilians rose up & got rid of their royal families.

The Armistice

The German Army never recovered after the failure of Ludendorff's Spring Offensive. On September 29th, Ludendorff told German politicians he believed that it was 'hopeless' and that Germany should surrender.

The German people were also calling for an end to the War because the British naval blockade had caused widespread food shortages and many were literally starving. Soon, German soldiers started to refuse orders and there was widespread mutiny amongst the troops.

On November 9th 1918, Kaiser Wilhelm II was forced to abdicate (step down) and fled abroad. He was replaced by a new government which was headed by Ebert, who was the leader of Germany's largest political party the SDP.

Ebert sent a group of representatives to France to negotiate an Armistice (ceasefire). The French asked the Germans to agree to the following terms:

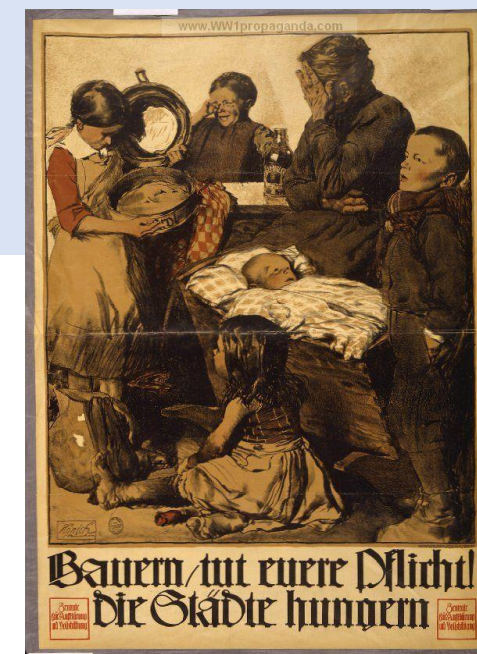
- All fighting had to stop within six hours.
- Germany had 15 days to leave all occupied land, including Alsace-Lorraine and Belgium.
- Germany must hand over ten battleships, six battle cruisers, eight cruisers and submarines, all of it's largest weapons, all railway trains, trucks and carriages.
- The allies must be allowed to occupy land in Germany to the West of the River Rhine.
- German troops had to leave Austria-Hungary, Romania and Turkey.
- The naval blockade would continue until a proper peace treaty was signed.
- Germany would pay reparations (a fine) for the damage that had been caused.

Germany officials reluctantly accepted these terms and signed the document to end the War on November 11th 1918 at 5:10am, the War officially ended at 11am that day.

Why Did Germany Lose the War?

- The British naval blockade which stopped food and resources from getting into Germany.
- The U.S. entry gave the allied an advantage because they brought with them resources, weapons and 2 million fresh soldiers.
- The failure of the Ludendorff Spring Offensive meant that Germany never recovered.
- The Bolshevik Revolution in Russia inspired uprisings and strikes in Germany which led to chaos and the eventual abdication of Kaiser Wilhelm II.
- When tanks were developed Germany did not see the value of them and only built 20. However, the French and British had more tanks and, although they weren't very efficient at first, they had a huge impact in later Battles (e.g. the Battle of Cambrai).
- During September and October 1918, Germany's allies collapsed one-by-one. The Bulgarian's surrendered after being driven back by Serbia, the Turks were defeated by British and Arab forces and Austria-Hungary surrendered after being defeated by the Italians.

Part Three: The End



Above: A German source from 1919 which reads 'Farmers do your duty! The cities are starving!'