

1.2.1 Terms

Schlieffen Plan: Germany's military strategy in 1914 for attacking France through its unprotected Belgian border.

Battle of the Marne (1914): battle where British and French stopped the German advance in 1914.

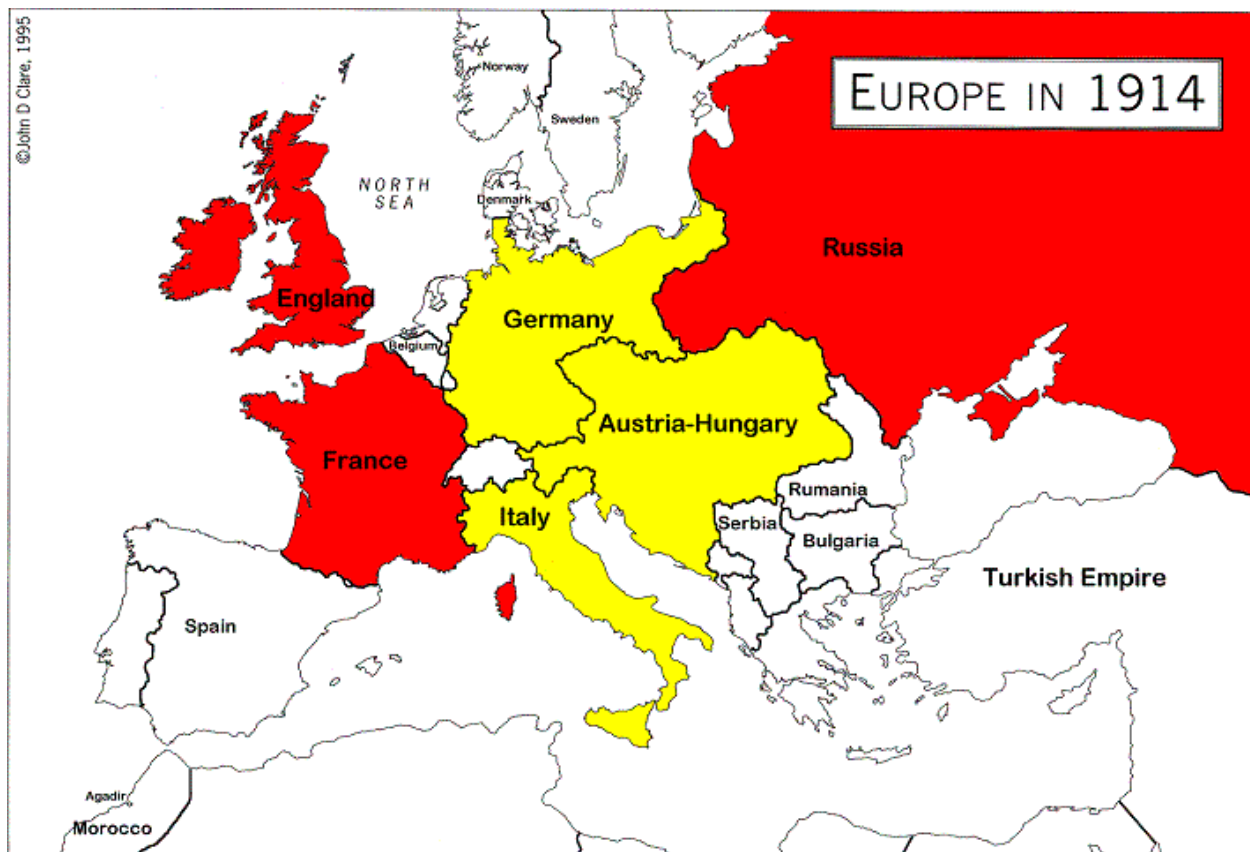
Battle of the Marne (1918): allied counter offensive against the Germans in 1918 involving British, French and American troops.

Battle of the Somme: fought mainly between the British and German armies in 1916. The plan was to relieve the French at Verdun but the battles bleed both British and German armies and achieved little. (Battle of Beaumont-Hamel and NL disaster)

Treaty of Brest-Litovsk: signed between Russia and Germany. It took Russia out of the war in 1917 and took huge amounts of Russian land away from the country.

Armistice: a temporary truce between two opposing forces.

1.2.2 W.W.I Alliances Map



1.2.3 Trench warfare leads to stalemate

- The nature of trench warfare lends itself to a defensive style of fighting.
- During W.W.I on the western front trench warfare was employed as the main battle strategy by both sides.
- Life in the trenches was not pleasant and the conditions experienced by soldiers, while in the trenches, was a significant factor leading to stalemate.
- Both the British and the German front lines dealt with such things as lice, trench foot, mice, etc.
- All of these things took a toll on the soldiers causing sickness and impeding fighting.
- Battle tactics and weapons technology used during trench warfare also made troop advancement difficult.
- Using old battle tactics of a frontal charge, while facing the machine gun, led to tremendous casualties for both sides.

1.2.4 Technology and W.W.I

- Advances in technology and the types of weapons turned out by European and later American industries made the war longer and bloodier and changed the nature of war.
- The **TANK** developed in 1916 and used by the British in the Battle of the Somme, were primitive and ineffective because crews were slow and the vehicles were often caught in the muddy battlefields.
- However with mechanical improvements and more experienced drivers the tank became a very effective troop mover and useful in overcoming battlefield obstacles toward war's end.

- When war began, aviation technology was in its infancy.
- **AIRPLANES** were weak and unreliable.
- However, military aviation made rapid advances and planes became more numerous, durable and powerful.
- Planes took aerial photographs of enemy defenses to observe enemy troop movements and study artillery placements before attacks were launched.
- By 1915, they were taking a more offensive role.
- Initially they had little impact but by the end of the war there were dogfights in the air and regular bombing missions.
- The air plane had become a significant military factor.

- On the seas there were no full scale naval battles between British and German fleets until the Battle of Jutland in the North Sea in 1916.
- The British sailed towards Denmark to intercept the German fleet.
- The British had superior naval strength yet failed to destroy the German fleet and suffered greater losses.
- The battle ended in a draw but both sides claimed victory.
- The British retained control of the North Sea and the Germans remained confined to the Baltic Sea for the remainder of the war.
- However German submarines were successful in destroying British shipping.
- In 1915, Germany announced that any allied merchant ships entering British water would be sunk by German **U-BOATS** or submarines.

- By October of 1917 the Germans had destroyed 8 million tonnes of shipping thus threatening Britain's lifeline to the US.
- The submarine war brought the US into the war.

Weapons Summary:

- 1) **Machine Guns:** were the fastest firing device known, it mowed down waves of men in seconds as they roared across no-man's land. It made one man as effective as 20-30 riflemen.
- 2) **Tanks:** noted above
- 3) **U-boats/Submarines:** were very effective in launching sneak attacks and roam the seas inflicting immense damage on merchant ships bringing supplies to Britain.
- 4) **Airplanes:** went from observers to fighters with mounted machine guns; Zeppelins (blimps) were used for bombing
- 5) **Poison gas:** with chemicals such as chlorine and mustard gas were somewhat effective, but were abandoned because if the wind was blowing at you, the gas would be blown back onto the troops.
- 6) **Grenades:** enabled soldiers to kill a group of troops from a distance and provided some safety for the soldier throwing the grenade as it gave him time to get away.

1.2.5 War on the Western and Eastern Fronts

Western Front:

- The allies stalled the initial attacks by Germany during the first 2 months of fighting.
- By October 1914 both sides had dug a line of trenches and both faced each other across mud and barbed wire.
- The tragic stalemate of trench warfare had begun.
- Over the next 4 years, the line of trenches remained virtually stationary in spite of massive battles.
- Tremendous losses were experienced by both sides.
- Millions were casualties and millions were conscripted or enlisted to take their place.
- When war ended on November 11th, 1918 the lines were almost in the same position as they were when established in 1914.

Eastern Front:

- On the Eastern Front the lines were much more mobile.
- In August 1914, the battle of Tannenburg the Germans easily defeated the Russians.
- For the Russians their supply system failed, troops were exhausted and communications were poor.
- As a result the 2nd Russian army was captured (30 000 dead, 100 000 captured).
- In September 1914, at the Battle of Maurisan Lakes, the Russians fought bravely but by 1917, 3 million Russians were dead or captured.
- Shortly after the Russians were forced to abandon the war on the Eastern Front and the Germans moved the majority of the forces to the Western Front.

1.2.6 America enters W.W.I

- At the start of the war the Americans proclaimed neutrality (“**splendid isolation**”) stressing that they had to be “impartial in thought and in actions”.
- As the war progressed, certain incidents occurred making impartiality impossible to stand by.
- The following events helped swing American opinion and ultimately drew the Americans into the war:

1) *Sinking of the Lusitania:*

- On May 7th, 1915 the British liner, The Lusitania was torpedoed by a German U-boat off the coast of Ireland.
- The Germans believed it was carrying ammunition for the allies.
- Among the 1198 victims, there were 128 Americans.
- The incident shocked the U.S and started to turn public opinion in the U.S against Germany.
- **However, they did not enter the war at this point.**

2) *The Zimmerman Telegram:*

- American public opinion turned towards war when newspapers published the Zimmerman Telegram.
- It was a secret message from the German foreign secretary Alfred Zimmerman to the Mexican government.
- It stated that if Mexico joined Germany against the U.S that Mexico could, “regain lost territory in Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona.”
- The United States government felt tremendous pressure from the public to declare war at this point, but did not.

3) *Unrestricted Submarine Warfare:*

- In early 1917, Germany proclaimed unrestricted submarine warfare, which meant sinking any ship that sailed into restricted areas as outlined by Germany.
- The Germans wanted to cut off supplies to Britain, which would lead to a quick surrender before the U.S could enter the war.
- As a result of the action the U.S cut off relations with Germany and turned towards war.
- In April 1917, they declared war on Germany stating they were, “fighting to make the world safe for democracy.”

1.2.7 American influence on W.W.I

- The entry of the United States was of significant to the outcome of W.W.I, however they started slowly.
- The U.S was unable to significantly add to the war effort in Europe for almost a full year.
- Time was needed to enlist, conscript, mobilize and train troops.
- Also, they needed time to prepare materials to fight a war.
- Thus, 1917 was a year of hardship for the allies in Europe.
- By late 1917 and early 1918, 50 000 American troops were landing in Europe each month.
- The arrival boosted morale of soldiers who had been fighting for over three years.
- However, only six full divisions had arrived by March (120 000 – 180 000).
- The Germans realizing this pushed for a decisive victory.
- From March to July the Germans attacked and made some advances to positions not held since 1914.

- In a counterattack on July 1918, the Second Battle of the Marne, the Americans helped the allies push the Germans back.
- This turned the tide of the war as the Germans were sent into retreat for the remainder of the war.
- The allies with American assistance now had the initiative.
- At sea, U.S battle groups almost immediately helped the British in stopping the German U-boats by providing extra destroyers for convoy work and laying mines.
- Also merchant ships brought extra supplies of food and munitions to help the allied cause.
- Perhaps the timing of the American entry into the war was just as important as the resources they provided.
- In March 1918 the Russians withdrew from the war, which allowed the Germans to move more troops to the Western Front.
- As well, the Germans now had control of agricultural regions in Russia which they used to relieve food shortages.
- Therefore, it can be said that the arrival of the Americans with fresh troops and resources counteracted the advantage gained by the Germans with the Russian withdrawal.

1.2.8 Impact of W.W.I on Canada

- At the start of the war Canada was a young nation taking their lead from the more experienced British; however by wars end this would be very different.
 - W.W.I impacted Canada in 3 main ways; politically, economically, and socially.
- 1) **Politically:**
 - Canada was no longer isolated from the rest of the world as it had been prior to 1914.
 - Canada took its place at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919 and was given representation in the League of Nations.
 - There was recognition given of Canada's war effort (particularly at Vimy Ridge) and it contributed greatly to national pride.
 - Canada had been transformed from a colony of Britain into a nation of its own.
 - 2) **Economically:**
 - Factories were built/transformed to produce guns, ammunition, ships, airplane parts, trucks, etc.
 - The economy was linked to industrial production as well as agriculture, lumbering, fishing, and mining. By the end of the war, Canada's economy had been transformed into a growing industrial nation.
 - Canada emerged a stronger and more prosperous nation with a new economy.
 - 3) **Socially:**
 - The status of women changed during the war.
 - Between 1914-1918 women played a major role on the home front.
 - They replaced male workers in industry, commerce, and agriculture taking over jobs that had been traditionally reserved for men.
 - Approximately 20 000 workers in munitions factories and aircraft manufacturing.
 - Thousands volunteered at home and overseas women served as nurses, ambulance drivers, ran canteens and administrative tasks.
 - By the end of the war, opposition to women's suffrage had dissolved.
 - Women, as a result, won the right to vote in federal elections in 1918.

1.2.9: Assess the Issue of Responsibility for the outbreak of W.W.I.

1. **France** *BLAMES* **Germany:**

WHY?

- Declared war on Russia (ally)
- Alsace-Lorraine
- Schlieffen Plan called for invasion of France

BUT:

- Germany only attacked Russia and France because Russia backed Serbia

2. **Germany/Austria-Hungary** *BLAMES* **Serbia**

WHY?

- Serbian Nationalism caused the assassination of Austria-Hungary's Archduke
- Harboring terrorists
- Their refusal of ultimatum turned into this global conflict

BUT:

- Serbian Nationalism only existed because Austria-Hungary annexed Bosnia
- Serbia could not trust Austria-Hungary to "just search for only the Black Hand"

3. **Serbia** *BLAMES* **Austria-Hungary**

WHY?

- Annexed Bosnia
- Encouraged Serbian Nationalism (Black Hand) to assassinate Franz Ferdinand for freedom.
- Serbs live in Austria-Hungary
- Austria-Hungary gave ridiculous ultimatum – no **COMPROMISE!** They wanted war!!!
- Austria-Hungary declared war **FIRST.**

BUT:

- Bosnia was Austria-Hungary territory! Not Serbian business

4. **Russia** *BLAMES* **Germany**

WHY?

- They declared war first! (Schlieffen Plan)
- Invaded ally, France.
- Militaristic

BUT:

- Germany was protecting ally, Austria-Hungary
- Military was needed for colonies
- Russia mobilized first!

5. **Britain *BLAMES* Germany**

WHY?

- Invaded France through Belgium (a neutral country)
- Militaristic
- Seeking world power

BUT:

- Germany was being held down
- Britain was unreasonable

Notes:

- Issue of responsibility is tangly.
- Most countries must share the blame
- War happened because diplomacy failed
- **NO COMPROMISES!!!!**