World War I
The Great War
Causes, Events, Aftermath
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_XPZQ0LAI94
Map of Allied and Central Powers

**Allied Powers**

Major powers
- British Empire (1914–1918)
- France (1914–1918)
- Italy (1914–1918)
- Russia (1914–1917)
- United States (1917–1918)

**Central Powers**

Major powers
- Austria-Hungary (1914–1918)
- Germany (1914–1918)
- Ottoman Empire/Turkey (1914–1918)
United Kingdom

- Constitutional monarchy
- 1914: Entered the war to defend Belgium’s neutrality
- Had the least to gain from a war in Europe
France

- A republic
- Many longed for glory days of Napoleon Bonaparte’s empire
- Colonial power
- Sought revenge against Germany

Napoleon III flanked by two of his ministers
Russia

- Tsar Nicholas II
- Economy based on serfdom
- Struggle to industrialize

Russian nobles use serfs in a card game, 1854
Germany

- Otto von Bismarck unified the German states (1871)
- Kaiser Wilhelm II
- Few colonies
- Leading industrial power by 1900

“Bismarck content as colonial powers scramble”
Ottoman Empire

- 1908: Western-style constitution
- Surrendered sovereignty for German help
- 1914: German influence in Ottoman foreign policy
Austria-Hungary

- Hapsburg Dynasty—an old and dying kingdom
- Numerous ethnicities
- Provided the “explosion” that led to the Great War

Archduke Franz Ferdinand and Austrian Emperor Franz Joseph
Prewar Europe

- Outdated social practices and military tactics
- Alliances
- Industrialization
- Aristocracies
- Calls for social reform
- Government responses

Hadol’s cartoon map of Europe
Nationalist feelings divide country

Multiple languages, religions, and cultures

Each wanted its own homeland

A battle in the first Balkan War
Long-Term Causes

- Unification of Germany
- Alliances
- Militarization
- Industrialization
- Social unrest
- Nationalism

New Zealand troops in the Somme and Ancre area
Unification of Germany

- 1870: Prussia defeats France at the Battle of Sedan
- 1871: Otto von Bismarck unites Prussia and the German states
Unification of Germany (continued)

- Threatened English industrial dominance
- Military buildup threatened all of Europe
- German army became the new standard for other European armies

Essen, Germany, 1911
Alliances

- Designed to balance power in Europe
- Triple Entente: U.K., France, and Russia
- Triple Alliance: Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy
- Belgium pledged neutrality
- Ottoman Empire weak
- Alliances assured total peace or total war
Industrialization

- Changed all aspects of life
- Armies swifter, stronger, more mobile, deadlier
- New military technologies

Krupp’s Great Gun
Enlightenment ideals infiltrated populace
People lost faith in divine right
People questioned government
Communists and socialists called for reforms
Monarchs looked for ways to unite their countries
Nationalism

A socialist addresses a London crowd in 1911
Nationalism

- A uniting force
- Patriotism combined with a sense of superiority
- Called for conquering the inferior

“Ruthlessness means German unity”
Events Leading to War

- June 28: Archduke Franz Ferdinand assassinated
- July 23: Austria-Hungary delivers ultimatum to Serbia
- July 28: Austria-Hungary declares war on Serbia
- July 29: Austria-Hungary bombards Belgrade; Kaiser Wilhelm II and Tsar Nicholas II exchange telegrams trying to avoid war
- July 30: Russia orders full mobilization; France sends troops within six miles of German border
- July 31: Germany officially asks Austria not to mobilize while unofficially suggesting they do, and moves troops toward France

“The lamps are going out all over Europe”
Events Leading to War (continued)

- August 1: France orders full mobilization; Germany orders full mobilization, moves toward Luxembourg; German ambassador sorrowfully delivers declaration of war to Russian foreign minister
- August 3: France and Germany declare war on each other; British mobilize army and navy
- August 4: Germany invades Belgium; Great Britain and Belgium declare war on Germany
- August 6: Austria-Hungary declares war on Russia
Ferdinand’s ideas created strife

Ferdinand and wife assassinated, June 28, 1914

Emperor used nephew’s assassination as excuse to punish Serbia

Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife on the parade route in Sarajevo

The apprehension of Gavrilo Princip
Franz Joseph’s Ultimatum to Serbia

- Designed to punish Serbia for encouraging Slavic nationalism
- Ultimatum had three main components
- Serbia refuses, looks to Russia for support
Kaiser Wilhelm II

- Family ties would supersede other interests
- Assassination an attack on the institution of monarchy

Wilhelm II, Emperor of Germany, 1888–1918
Tsar Nicholas II

- Chose Slavic cultural ties over both family ties and the monarchy
- Mobilized army to support Serbia
- Kaiser Wilhelm II mobilized army in response
- Both refused to back down
Mobilization

- Pre-war mobilization plans hinder diplomacy
- Austria declared war on Serbia
- Military leaders called up troops
- Germany declared war on Russia on August 1, 1914
Germany’s Schlieffen Plan

- Outlined Germany’s plan of attack
- Relied on rapid defeat of France
- Avoiding two-front war essential
- Violated Belgium’s neutrality

Map of the Western Front, 1914
Key Battles

- Marne
- Verdun
- Somme
- St. Mihiel
- Hindenburg Line

British battlefield in Belgium, September 1917
Battle of the Marne

- September 5–9, 1914
- Marne River, East of Paris
- Stopped Germany’s rapid advance
- Prevented the fall of Paris
- Set the stage for trench warfare

Second Battle of the Marne
Battle of Verdun

- February 21–December 18, 1916
- Verdun, France, 120 miles east of Paris
- Demoralized both sides
- First extensive use of the flamethrower

Transportation of troops during Battle of Verdun, France
Battle of the Somme

- July 1–November 18, 1916
- Somme River, France
- Drew Germans away from Verdun
- Tactics became more sophisticated and supply lines became more efficient
- First use of tanks (British)
Battle of St. Mihiel

- September 12–13, 1918
- French/German border, southwest of Verdun
- First battle using exclusively American troops under American commanders

Wagons stuck in the mud at the Battle of St. Mihiel
Hindenburg Line

- Crucial stronghold
- Formidable barrier to Allied advances
- Operation Alberich
- British forces breeched the line in early October of 1918

General Hindenburg, Kaiser Wilhelm II, and General Lundendorff review battle plans

Generals Hindenburg and Lundendorff
Changing Warfare

- Changes in technologies, tactics, and weaponry
- Communication achieved through telephone, Morse Code, radios, and carrier pigeons
Trench Warfare

- Forces dug in to begin trench warfare along 475-mile front
- Plagued with disease, lice, water, and mud
- German trenches were the most sophisticated

British trench soldiers in France wait to attack
Life in the Trenches

- Monotony
- “No Man’s Land”
- Dawn and dusk attacks
- British front line troops typically served for four days before being relieved
Shell Shock

- Symptoms
- Shell-shocked soldiers first viewed as cowards; many were executed
- Treatment improved once the condition was identified

Nurse and wounded French soldier
Christmas Truce

- Christmas, 1914
- Unofficial truces implemented between soldiers
- Truce was short-lived
  - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p05E_ohaQGk

German and British troops meet during the Christmas truce
Scorched Earth

- Tactic implemented by the Russians, borrowed by the Germans
- Retreating armies would burn buildings, ravage crops, cut down trees, and force inhabitants to flee
- Goal was to leave nothing of value behind that opposing forces could use

Ruins of a French town after German troops retreated through it, 1918
Weapons

- Warships
- Submarines
- Artillery
- Chemical weapons

German troops use chlorine gas, Flanders, 1917

German submarine off the Danish coast
Airplanes

• First used for intelligence gathering; later armed
• Bomber planes
• “Aces”

Baron Manfred Freiherr von Richthofen (the Red Baron)

German bombing raid on British camp, 1915
World War I

Submarines

- Britain initially had more submarines than Germany
- German submarine strategy
- Backlash

German sailors load a torpedo on a U-boat

German U-boat and a sinking English steamer
Sinking of the *Lusitania*

- May 7, 1915: Passenger ship sunk by German submarine
- More than 1000 civilian deaths, including 128 Americans
- Germany claimed the ship was carrying munitions
- Incident put the U.S. one step closer to entering the war
Machine Guns

- Maintained and perpetuated trench warfare
- Designers and manufactures continued to modify original machine gun—the Maxim

British troops with machine guns
Howitzers

- Heavy artillery
- Became more mobile
- Especially useful in bombarding enemy strongholds from long distances

Howitzer left by retreating German army in France
Chemical Weapons

- Archaic and modern weaponry and strategies meet
- Poison gas
- Attacked nervous system
  - painful death
  - long-lasting mental disturbances

A German dispatch rider wearing a gas mask, 1917
Flamethrowers

- Terrifying German weapon first used at Verdun, 1916
- Effects
- Counter tactics

French troops using flamethrowers
Tanks

- British innovation
- Unsuccessful at first
- Cambrae, 1917: First successful tank offensive
- Increasingly important weapon in modern warfare

French tanks, Americans support French troops

British tank in action
Difficulties in keeping lines of communication open

- Telephone’s shortcomings
- Radio’s shortcomings

German soldiers set up a radio on the Western Front

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kR6doFpKH5Q&list=PLGtgcIxCoj_1FwHu4n1mNIVM3uXylFiFT
The Media

• 1916: First war films
• Newspapers provided the majority of the public with war news

Behind the scenes of a film in Austria, 1918
Zimmerman Telegram

- Sent January 1917 by the German Foreign Secretary
- Proposed a German-Mexican alliance against the U.S.
- Telegram intercepted by the British and made public
- Added to the American public’s desire to enter the war

Coded copy of the Zimmerman Telegram
The U.S. Enters the War

- April 6, 1917: U.S. officially declares war against Germany
- Propaganda, submarine warfare, Zimmerman telegram erode neutrality
- “Peace without victory”
The Draft

- U.S. needed massive military force
- June 5, 1917—Draft implemented
- 24 million men registered; 6,400,000 actually called into service

New York City men wait to register for the draft
Liberty Bonds

- Intended to finance the war, increase public support for the war effort
- Patriotic appeal
- Over $20 billion raised from bonds
Changing Roles of Women

- Women filled factory jobs
- Views of women and their roles in society changed
- Many countries granted women’s suffrage

French women assemble American airplanes
Russian Revolution

- 1915: Tsar Nicholas takes command of the army
- Political vacuum in St. Petersburg
- Provincial government created
- Tsar abdicates to the Duma

Cossacks slaughter people of Odessa, 1905
The Soviet Union and the War

- Provisional government was short-lived
- Lenin and the Soviets assume power
- Treaty of Brest-Litovsk: Russia withdraws from WWI

Lenin at the Second Congress of the Soviets, 1917
Arabs in the War

- Arab tribes unite with one another and the British against Ottoman rule
- Arab raids disrupt Turkish supply lines and draw troops away from the British-Turkish front

Turkish supply camels at the Egyptian front
War's End: The Armistice

- November 11, 1918
- Temporary agreement to stop fighting
- Peace negotiations and treaty followed

Crowds of people celebrating the armistice
Paris Peace Conference

- “Big Three”
- 27 countries participated
- Defeated powers were not invited
- Six months to reach treaty agreement on Germany
- Other treaties
Versailles Treaty

- June 28, 1919: Weimar Republic signed treaty in utter defeat
- Treaty’s conditions
- Was the treaty overly punitive?
Wilson's “Fourteen Points”

- Wilson’s plan for a “peace without victory”
- European leaders only implement some of the Fourteen Points in the Versailles Treaty
League of Nations

- Part of the Versailles Treaty
- U.S. Senate rejects the treaty
- U.S. never joins the League
- League turns out to be ineffective, inconsistent, easily manipulated

American anti-League cartoon

World Disarmament Conference at the League of Nations
Number of Wounded

Central Powers
- Germany: 4,216,000 (44%)
- Austria-Hungary: 3,620,000 (39%)

Allied Powers
- British Empire: 2,111,000 (18%)
- France: 3,600,000 (30%)
- Russia: 4,950,000 (42%)
- Italy: 947,000 (8%)
- United States: 204,000 (2%)

A British first aid station near Cambrae, 1918
Number of Deaths

Central Powers

- Germany: 1,953,000 (50%)
- Ottoman Empire: 725,000 (19%)
- Austria-Hungary: 1,200,000 (31%)

Allied Powers

- France: 1,368,000 (28%)
- British Empire: 942,000 (20%)
- Russia: 1,700,000 (36%)
- United States: 116,000 (2%)

German soldier lies dead next to his machine gun
Physical and Financial Costs of the War

- Food shortages
- Economic depression

Starving children in the Ukraine
Social/Political Costs of the War

- Refugees
- Ethnic minorities

French refugees from the spring 1918 German offensive
Arts and the Great War

- Poets
- Visual imagery
- Novels

Isaac Rosenberg  Wilfred Owen  Erich Maria Remarque
New Nations: Europe

- Ireland
  - Michael Collins
  - Northern Ireland
- Division of Austria-Hungary
  - Austria
  - Hungary
  - Czechoslovakia
  - Yugoslavia
  - Other portions went to Romania, Poland, and Italy
New Nations: The Middle East

• Sykes-Picot Agreement
• Mandates
• Balfour Declaration
• Anti-western views

Arab leaders at the Paris Peace Conference (Captain T.E. Lawrence, third from right)
Post-War Europe

- Instability
- Spread of fascism

Map of Europe after World War I, 1919–1926