



CHAPTER TWO: THE FIRST WORLD WAR

IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS REGARDING THIS CHAPTER

In the context of the provincial exam in this course, this chapter and Chapter 4 are different from the others. In order to fully understand the topic of the First World War and Second World War, the authors felt it necessary to go well beyond the IRPs relating to the causes and events of these wars. In the case of the First World War, it is no longer in the History Twelve Course. Because of this, many schools are now doing an extensive survey of the First World War in Grade Eleven. However, as students will not be required to know all of these topics in detail for the provincial exam in Social Studies Eleven, we have included a special page at the end of the chapter listing those topics and items that could be classified as “must know.” To further help you identify within the text the information that you will be responsible for on the provincial exam you will see a symbol like this  at the heading.

When you see this symbol it applies to all of the information through to the end of that heading. For example. On page 41 you will see one of these symbols beside **B. Imperialism**. This then means that everything up to **C. Militarism** is deemed necessary. Sometimes you will see a heading like  **IV. The War on the Home Front**. This means that all of the headings under this major designation are important.

The focus for the Grade Eleven provincial exam will be the role of Canada in these world wars. However, those of you who are planning to take History Twelve, will find the History Twelve course much easier if you pay careful attention to all of the material in these chapters.

LIST OF TERMS FOR CHAPTER TWO

1. Imperialism
2. Colonies
3. Industrialization
4. Pan-Slavism
5. Militarism
6. Two-Power Standard
7. Arms Race
8. Nationalism
9. Black Hand
10. Alliances
11. Triple Alliance
12. Triple Entente
13. Blank Cheque
14. Ultimatum
15. Schlieffen Plan
16. Two-front war
17. Newfoundland Regiment
18. Sir Sam Hughes
19. Valcartier
20. Ross Rifle
21. Canadian Expeditionary Force
22. Lieutenant-General Arthur Currie
23. Battle of the Marne
24. Stalemate
25. "No Man's Land"
26. "Going over the top"
27. Battles of Attrition
28. Total War
29. Battle of Ypres
30. Battle of Verdun
31. Battle of the Somme
32. Shell Shock
33. Battle of Vimy Ridge
34. Battle of Passchendaele
35. Gallipoli Campaign
36. Dogfight
37. Ace
38. Billy Bishop
39. Victoria Cross
40. Lusitania
41. U-boats
42. Convoy System
43. The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk
44. The Hundred Days
45. Rations
46. The Halifax Explosion
47. Enemy Aliens
48. War Measures Act
49. Censorship
50. Honour Rationing
51. Victory Bonds
52. Income Tax
53. Conscription
54. Military Service Bill (Act)
55. Conscientious Objectors/Pacifists
56. Union Government
57. Suffragettes
58. Wartime Elections Act
59. Propaganda
60. The Armistice
61. President Woodrow Wilson
62. Fourteen Points
63. Internationalism
64. Treaty of Versailles
65. Paris Peace Conferences
66. Realism vs Idealism
67. Reparations
68. Self-determination
69. War Guilt Clause

I. CAUSES OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR

Canadian troops were involved in the First World War as part of the British Empire, and played an important role in the Allied victory. Canadians gained worldwide respect on the battlefields of Europe for their bravery and skill. Meanwhile, the war on the home front led to long-term changes to the Canadian economy and society. Although the First World War marked an important step towards Canada's independence from Britain, it served to create further tensions between French and English Canadians.

As this unit progresses, you will see how many considered the First World War to be inevitable. A number of forces were at play that simply led the nations of Europe down the path to war. The following concepts represent the underlying or background causes of the First World War. Although these issues by themselves may not have led to war, in combination the result was catastrophic.

A. CONCEPT OF WAR

1. At the beginning of the century it was believed that war offered the possibility of a glorious adventure. The people of 1914 knew little of how a modern war, after industrialization would work—to them war was legendary, romantic, heroic. They imagined cavalry attacks, glittering uniforms, and victory marches—parades and music. Young men believed that they could not afford to miss out on the most wonderful and exciting experience of their lives. Today many people cringe at the very mention of the word “war.”

B. IMPERIALISM

1. **Imperialism** can be defined as extending the rule of authority of one country over other countries or territories. In this case, imperialism involved forming and maintaining an empire through the establishment of **colonies** or spheres of influence.
2. Imperialism resulted from **industrialization** because countries needed raw materials to supply their factories, and new markets in which to sell their goods. The industrial plants of Europe were producing more goods than could be consumed at home, and as a result of this, countries sought to obtain colonies where they could sell their goods.
3. Countries would often come into conflict over competition for colonies—particularly in Africa and South-East Asia. These conflicts in faraway places often threatened to bring war between European countries, even within Europe itself.

4. EMPIRES

a) Great Britain

The phrase “the sun never set on the British Empire” clearly described the vast area of land occupied by Britain—British strategic military and naval bases encircled the globe. The British Empire was the envy of other aspiring colonial powers, as Britain became tremendously wealthy by its empire.

b) France

France had large many colonies in the Western Hemisphere and Central Africa. Historically, France had repeatedly got itself into trouble with its rather large empire. At the turn of the century Germany was France's

principal rival in Europe and Germany began to target the French Empire. France feared with some justification that Germany wanted to take over its colonies.

c) Belgium, Holland, Spain, Portugal, and Italy

These countries managed to secure some colonies as well. Belgium and Holland had some rather important colonies given that they were such small players on the European scene. Spain and Portugal had largely squandered their empires in the early part of the nineteenth century.

d) Russia

Russia promoted **Pan-Slavism**. This idea planned to unite the Slavic peoples (people of the "Slavic" ethnic background) of the Balkans (an area of south eastern Europe). Russia wanted to play the "big brother" role in encouraging Slav nationalism. Its motives for this were somewhat selfish. Russia desperately wanted to control a warm water port that would be ice free all year. Given its severe climate, most of Russia's ports were frozen during the winter. If Russia could dominate the Balkans, it could also achieve the 200-year-old goal of achieving that warm water port.

e) Austria-Hungary

Not only did Russia hope to dominate the Balkans, but so did Austria-Hungary. Austria-Hungary's imperial programme did not focus on overseas colonies but upon territory next door to its own. Austria-Hungary wanted to dominate the Balkans because the ever-increasing Slav nationalism in that region threatened its very existence. This ramshackle empire was threatened by Pan-Slavism because in its own country there were many ethnic groups that were linked to the same ethnic groups in the rest of the Balkans. After these groups began to desire the formation of their own independent states in the late nineteenth century, they threatened to cause the disintegration of Austria-Hungary. Austria-Hungary believed that its only chance for survival was to dominate the ethnic groups to the South (especially the aggressive Serbs). For this reason, Austria-Hungary stood squarely in the path of Russian aggressiveness in the region. It is useful to note, even at this early stage, that the First World War was sparked by the events in the Balkans.

f) Germany

While Germany had colonies in Southwest and East Africa, its colonies were not as strategically situated, nor as economically desirable as were Britain's. In fact, in 1914, the German colonies were still a negative drain on the German economy. German leaders demanded that Germany acquire more colonies, which would be sources of raw materials for expanding German industries. This demand brought Germany into conflict with other European powers, particularly Britain and France. Shortly after the turn of the century, Germany made a rather dangerous decision regarding the need for an empire. Germany decided that it could never be a true great power unless it extended its imperial holdings (i.e., acquire more colonies). Its pursuit of this goal changed many of the relationships between other countries that had reason to fear German expansion.

5. CONFLICT

It is evident that not only was Germany on a collision course with Britain

and France, but Russia and Austria-Hungary also had competing interests in the Balkans. By 1912, Turkey's Empire in the Balkans was disintegrating, and the weak new states couldn't agree on boundaries or satisfy the territorial demands of racial minorities. Both Russia and Austria-Hungary anxiously awaited the right time to intervene in the region to pursue their interests, which put into action would directly conflict with one another. Furthermore, this potential conflict in the Balkans would almost certainly bring in the respective allies of Russia and Austria-Hungary. In fact this is exactly what happened in 1914.

C. MILITARISM

1. **Militarism** can be defined as the policy of making a country's armed forces very strong, and allowing a political situation in which military interests dominate government policy. In Germany, Britain, France, Russia, and Italy, all men between the ages of 18 and 60 were fully trained and prepared for army service at any time. Militarism is also a state of mind which accepts war as a respectable way of advancing a country's interests and resolving disputes. This attitude made the conflicts between European nations about colonies and boundaries ever so much more dangerous.
2. In the early 1900's, the British Navy was the largest in the world—a necessity in order to protect its huge empire. The official British policy regarding the navy was called the **Two-Power Standard**. This policy meant that the British navy must at all times be equal or better than any two other navies combined. Because Germany wanted to be a major power of Europe, it needed to build a strong empire as well. However, in order to do so, it would require a large navy. This element brought Germany into direct conflict with Britain.
3. When Germany began to build up its navy, Britain saw this as a threat to its position of power. This led Britain and Germany into an **arms race**, which is competition to see who could build become the best equipped militarily. The this case the focus was naval power. The launching of the Dreadnought class of warship early in the twentieth century was the best example of this naval arms race.
4. Germany also competed with France and Russia to build the largest army. The German army was not the largest in Europe, but was easily the best in areas such as training, equipment, medical supplies, and discipline. These naval and arms races greatly increased tension, and the possibility of war in Europe.

D. NATIONALISM

1. THERE ARE ESSENTIALLY TWO TYPES OF NATIONALISM:

- a) The first can be defined as a strong feeling of patriotism and pride for one's country, and/or the desire of a people to preserve its own language, religion and traditions. In other words, this type of **nationalism** could be called "nation-statism" because it is connected to an existing state. By 1914, the feelings of nationalism among European countries were extreme.
- b) The second type of nationalism exists within an ethnic group that does not have its own country. These groups desire to be liberated from a dominant ethnic group, different than themselves. This type is important to the history of Europe in the years preceding the First World War, because it was

this type of nationalism that actually led to the beginning of war in the Balkans, and more particularly, in Austria-Hungary.

2. Most European countries valued national interests over anything else. Immediately preceding the First World War, European countries wanted to assert themselves and their national identities. They were prepared to go to war to promote the interests of their homelands.
3. Nationalism was especially intense in the Balkans. Austria-Hungary had taken over Bosnia, an area where many different ethnic groups lived. There were 11 Slav groups in Austria-Hungary that were nationalistic and wanted independence. When Austria-Hungary took over Bosnia, the Serbs in Bosnia were upset, but so was Serbia itself. Serbia had ambitions to add Bosnia to its country. Russia threatened war to protect the Slav groups in Serbia and Bosnia, but backed down because Britain and France (its allies) did not support this. The Slav groups in Bosnia greatly resented being under Austrian control. A number of rebellions took place within the Austrian Empire as various groups tried to break free of Austrian rule. The area was becoming the "Powder Keg of Europe." In fact, German leader Otto von Bismarck stated many years earlier that the next war would start over "some damn

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fool thing in the Balkans.”

4. Some Bosnian Serbs were determined to free Bosnia from Austria-Hungary, so they formed the **Black Hand** (a terrorist organization which supported violent action to achieve its goals). They threatened to kill the Austrian Archduke Ferdinand if he entered Bosnia. However, the goals of the Black Hand were much broader than freeing Bosnia. Their goals were to liberate all the ethnic groups of Slav-descent in Austria-Hungary and form what they called “Greater Serbia,” later known as Yugoslavia.

E. ALLIANCES

1. **Alliances** can be defined as a close association of nations for the achievement of common objectives, or a group of countries united for the purpose of joint military protection. Along with their own military preparedness, the formation of alliances was the principal method for nations to ensure their security in the years leading up to the First World War.
2. Colonial rivalries in Europe led each country to seek friends (defensive alliances) for their protection. By the early 1900s, two alliances were established:

a) **Triple Alliance (also known as the Central Powers)**

The **Triple Alliance** consisted of Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy, who all agreed to support each other if attacked.

b) **Triple Entente (also known as the Allied Powers)**

Through a less formal group of arrangements, France, Russia, and Britain loosely agreed to support each other through the **Triple Entente**. However, at no time did these three countries sit down and sign a formal agreement. In fact, only France and Russia truly formed a defensive alliance in which they promised to support each other if attacked.

F. COUNTDOWN TO WAR

1. ASSASSINATION

On June 28, 1914, Archduke Ferdinand, the heir to the Austrian throne, was killed by Gavrilo Princip, a member of the “Black Hand” while visiting Bosnia (within the Austro-Hungarian empire).

2. BLANK CHEQUE

Austria-Hungary consulted with Germany to discuss how to deal with the crisis. Germany gave Austria-Hungary the famous **Blank Cheque**. The Blank Cheque meant that Germany would support Austria-Hungary, even if that meant going to war. Germany felt certain that Britain would remain neutral if war broke out.

3. AUSTRIA-HUNGARY PREPARED FOR WAR

With the support of Germany, Austria-Hungary began to prepare for war against Serbia.

4. THE ULTIMATUM

Because the “Black Hand” was a Serbian terrorist organization, the Austrians sent Serbia an **ultimatum**—hand over your terrorists or face war. (An ultimatum is a threat which states that one must meet certain conditions or face dire consequences.)

5. SERBIA’S REPLY

Although Serbia agreed to most of the terms of the ultimatum, it asked for

clarification on a few points. Austria-Hungary interpreted this response to be a rejection, as it was looking for an excuse to go to war.

6. ON JULY 28, 1914, AUSTRIA-HUNGARY DECLARED WAR ON SERBIA

7. RUSSIA'S MOBILIZATION

Russia, under Tsar Nicholas II, believed that this declaration of war was part of a German plot to occupy the Balkans (remember that Russia was looking for access to a warm water port). Russia gave Serbia its own version of a blank cheque and began to mobilize its army against Austria-Hungary.

8. GERMANY DECLARED WAR ON RUSSIA

Germany, under Kaiser Wilhelm II, demanded that Russia demobilize. When this didn't happen, Germany supported Austria by mobilizing its army and declaring war on Russia.

9. FRANCE SUPPORTED RUSSIA

Because France was in alliance with Russia, it told Russia that it would declare war.

10. GERMANY DECLARED WAR ON FRANCE

Germany felt threatened by Russia and France, so it ordered them to stop mobilizing. When they refused, Germany declared war on France.

11. SCHLIEFFEN PLAN

Germany planned to attack France through the neutral country of Belgium, using what was known as the **Schlieffen Plan**. The Schlieffen Plan was designed to avoid a **two-front war**. If a two-front war occurred, it would mean that Germany would have to fight France on one side, and Russia on the other—both at the same time. According to the Schlieffen Plan, the Germans planned to use most of their army to defeat France in the West within six weeks, at which time they would transfer most of those forces to the East to defeat Russia. Schlieffen assumed that Russia would take six weeks to get ready for war. Alfred Von Schlieffen (who developed the plan) also assumed that Britain would remain neutral, and that Germany could pass through the neutral territory of Belgium on the way to France—Von Schlieffen was completely mistaken. Belgian neutrality was guaranteed by Britain. In other words, if a country tried to enter Belgium for the purposes of war, Britain would take action to stop it.

12. BRITAIN DECLARED WAR ON GERMANY

Because Britain had agreed to protect the neutrality of Belgium, it declared war on Germany when Germany invaded Belgium. The First World War had begun.

G. REVIEW OF MOTIVES

1. GERMANY

Germany believed that it could win a war now, but maybe not later.

2. AUSTRIA-HUNGARY

Austria-Hungary was concerned with the survival of its multi-ethnic state, and wanted to solve the Pan-Slav problem once and for all. Remember that the Pan-Slav problem was that Austria-Hungary dominated the Slav people who lived in Austria-Hungary, but the Slav people wanted to be united with other Slav groups in Russia to form their own country.

3. RUSSIA

Russia's motives were mostly economic—it badly wanted access to an all-weather port.

4. FRANCE

France believed that loyalty to the alliance system was the only way to remain a major power.

5. BRITAIN

Britain believed in the independence of sovereign states (meaning independent states in which the people govern themselves, i.e. no foreign ruler), and also in curbing the ever-increasing strength of Germany.

II. CANADA GOES TO WAR

Canada automatically entered the war as part of the British Empire. When Britain declared war, Canada was at war. In the late nineteenth century, Canada had already sent military support to the British in a war in South Africa known as the Boer War.

A. SUPPORT

Canadian support for going to war in Europe was widespread. Prime Minister Robert Borden and his cabinet decided to support Britain wholeheartedly.

Canada offered Britain a force of 25,000 men trained, equipped, and paid for by the Canadian government. Canada actually had only 3,000 regular army soldiers, and two navy cruisers, but it also had over 60,000 militia (citizen soldiers trained for emergencies). In 1914, Newfoundland was not yet part of Canada. While some Newfoundlanders joined Canadian regiments, most became members of the **Newfoundland Regiment**. (At this time Newfoundland was not a part of Canada.)

To supplement existing Canadian forces, Colonel Hughes sent out a call for volunteers to join for \$1 a day. Over 10,000 Canadians volunteered. Hundreds of women also joined as nurses and ambulance drivers to serve overseas.

B. WHY DID THEY JOIN?**1. SENSE OF PATRIOTISM**

Canadians felt proud to fight for their country. In English-speaking Canada, strong sentimental ties to Great Britain also contributed to this sense of patriotism, as recent immigrants from Britain were the first to volunteer. As the war developed Canadian Prime Minister Robert Borden promised a total of 500,000 men in support of the British, which contributed to the Canadian sense of duty. Although some regions like the Prairies contributed more than others, all of Canada supported the war in the first several years.

2. FEELINGS OF EXCITEMENT AND ADVENTURE

Given the pre-First World War attitudes about war in general, many young men still viewed war as the "great adventure," and enlisted for the sense of excitement they thought the war would bring.

C. TRAINING THE TROOPS

Sir Sam Hughes was Canada's Minister of Militia and Defence at the beginning of the war. Hughes set up a training camp for over 30,000 men at **Valcartier**, Quebec. Troops were issued the **Ross Rifle** (manufactured in Canada), which was good for sharp shooting, but poor in trench warfare (more on this later). By October 1914, Canadian troops were on their way across the Atlantic, and by February, Canadian troops were on their way to the front lines in France.



Robert Borden
Prime Minister
1911-1920

III. WAR IN EUROPE

Canadians served overseas as part of the overall Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF). On the Western Front in 1915, two and eventually four Canadian divisions were formed into the Canadian Corps, which fought alongside British forces. Julian Byng, a British general, originally commanded the entire Corps. In 1917, Canadian Lieutenant-General Arthur Currie became commander of the Corps. This was the first time that the British gave up command to a Canadian. Both Byng and Currie ensured that the Canadian troops would fight as one unit, rather than being dispersed throughout the British units. The creation of the Canadian Corps not only strengthened the unity of Canadian soldiers fighting in Europe, but also gave Canadians at home a sense of pride.

A. STALEMATE

1. When Germany moved into Belgium (according to the Schlieffen Plan), it encountered strong resistance, but nevertheless, soon Germany was invading France.
2. Germany threw all of its forces against the French forces east of Paris, but was stopped in the **Battle of the Marne**. Because Germany was denied a quick victory in the West, a two-front war became a reality.
3. Germany could not advance, and the British and French could not drive the Germans back. As a result, both sides dug trenches (ditches) to protect their troops. They had reached a **stalemate** (see p. 51). In most areas of the Western Front the lines of trenches moved very little over the next three years.

B. TRENCH WARFARE

1. Because the airplane was still primitive, and the tank had not yet been developed at the start of the war, **trench warfare** was a standard war tactic. The trenches were usually about 400 metres apart. These trenches offered protection against enemy fire, yet soldiers remained vulnerable to artillery (bomb) attacks. While some trenches were quite elaborate, others were nothing more than a muddy ditch often filled with rotting victims of the war. Rats, lice and various fungal diseases were common.
2. Between the trenches there was a narrow strip called "**no man's land**." Whenever soldiers detected movement in enemy territory, they fired rifles and machine guns across no man's land. The Canadian-issued Ross rifle proved to be troublesome in trench warfare, as it jammed easily in the dirt and mud.
3. When the officers ordered an advance, this meant "**going over the top**" of the trench and across no man's land fully exposed to enemy fire. Virtually no one anticipated the tremendous defensive capabilities of the machine gun. At the beginning of the war, machine guns could fire about 500 rounds (shots) per minute. As the war progressed, this moved up to about 1,000 rounds. Each side had hundreds of these guns in defensive positions, thus making any entry into no man's land futile. In fact, entering no man's land almost always meant certain death. Canadian troops would write home to their friends and family that machine guns "mowed down the soldiers like wheat falling before the cutter." The implementation of the machine gun was the main reason why the Western Front resulted in a three-year-long stalemate.

- 4. Occasionally the troops managed to capture the enemy's front line (there were two lines of trenches). However, the enemy then merely moved back to their reserve trenches. Barbed wire was stretched across the new patch of no man's land. This tactic resulted in a gain or loss of only a few metres of land. Often thousands of soldiers were killed in the process.
- 5. Soldiers fought, ate and slept in the trenches. They froze in the snow and sleet, and sometimes the trenches were filled waist-deep with icy water. Entire divisions were killed by epidemics of fever and the flu because men could go weeks and months without washing. Sometimes men came down with trench foot, which caused their feet to swell to three times their normal size. The following describes what life was like in the trenches:

"Try to sleep with a belt full of ammunition around you, your rifle bolt biting into your ribs, entrenching tool handle sticking into the small of your back, with a tin hat for a pillow; and feeling very damp and cold, with cooties (lice and other parasites) boring for oil in your arm pits, and the air foul from the stench of grimy human bodies being whiffed into your nostrils." *Note from an unknown soldier.*

C. THE CHANGING FACE OF WAR

1. NEW TYPES OF FIGHTING

a) Battles of Attrition (grinding down)

As a result of trench warfare, it was almost impossible for one side to gain the upper hand—these came to be called **Battles of Attrition**. Traditionally battles consisted of frontal attacks in which one army overwhelmed the other and victory was declared. Instead of decisive victories in the first three years of this war, each side simply tried to grind the other side down in order to outlast them. The main reason that the First World War became a series of battles of attrition is that the defensive weapons were superior to the weapons used for attack. The machine gun, firing hundreds of rounds (bullets) per minute, made frontal attacks suicidal.

b) Total War

In **total war** all of the resources of a nation are organized for one purpose—to win the war. In most wars previous to the twentieth century, the conflict at the battle front had little impact on life on the home front. The nature of warfare in the twentieth century drastically changed the relationship between the battle front and the home front. Some would argue that the home front was now as important as the front where armies faced one another. Do not mistake the home front for another battle front. It was not. The home front was responsible for production, enlisting troops, finance and organization. Because a nation's ability to produce and pay for the goods required for such a massive war, the home front became as important as the battle front.

Because modern warfare required such a massive volume of materials and supplies, the ability of a nation to produce and deliver the goods necessary for the troops to be successful became a vital factor in determining who would win the war. Most countries introduced conscription (compulsory military service) when the casualty lists grew to previously unheard of

levels. Industries were retooled to mass produce war materials instead of domestic or consumer goods. New methods of financing such a large war were introduced. War bonds (war bonds were essentially a method of citizens loaning money to their government) were sold to the public appealing to their patriotism, and income tax was introduced for the first time. In this frenzy to produce the necessary war goods, the engineer, the businessman and the math professor at university became as important as the troops in the trenches. Additionally, women took non-traditional jobs to fill the places vacated by men as they enlisted or were conscripted. Even children were used to collect scrap metal to speed up the process of production.

The term "total war" is a twentieth century invention. To understand this concept in one sense is simple—one merely has to take the word "total" very literally.

2. THE IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY ON THE BATTLEFIELD

a) Tanks

Tanks were used for the first time in warfare in the Battle of the Somme. Tanks were developed in order to solve the problems of trench warfare. Compared to infantry, tanks could attack across no man's land in relative safety because they were immune to machine gun fire and could roll over barbed wire. At first, these tanks had little impact because they were so clumsy. However, many military historians agree that by 1918, the tank was a major reason for the Allied victory.

b) Poison Gas

Poison gas was used for the first time in warfare in the Battle of Ypres. German troops pushed hoses into no man's land and pumped out poisonous chlorine gas towards the Canadian and French lines. Exposure to chlorine gas caused blindness, stripped the lining of the lungs, and eventually caused people to choke, or essentially drown, due to the build-up of fluid in the lungs. Before gas masks were available, soldiers were ordered to urinate on a piece of cloth and hold it over their noses and mouths to neutralize the gas. This would be a good time to read Wilfred Owen's *Dulce et Decorum est*, a poem by a poet/soldier who was subjected to a gas attack. At one point Wilfred Owen spent time in a psychiatric hospital suffering from battle fatigue, (a condition that was hard to describe, but essentially it meant that the soldier was unfit to carry one for psychiatric reasons) but returned to the battlefields only to be killed by a sniper's bullet a few days before the war ended. If you want to read more about Owen and other war poets try Pat Barker's Booker Prize winning novel, *Regeneration*. Barker's novel was also made into a movie in 1997.

c) Machine Guns

Although British generals did not initially believe that the machine gun would be of any use, it soon became obvious that machine guns would prove to be very efficient at killing enemy troops as they advanced over no man's land. Machine guns and artillery fire accounted for most of the deaths throughout the war.

d) Submarines

Although First World War submarines were very small and inefficient by

today's standards, their torpedoes could sink the largest ships. Torpedoes could be fired underwater at a moving target. The main role of the German submarines in the First World War was trying (until 1917 very successfully) to destroy merchant ships (freighters) supplying Britain with war materials and other domestic products. The German goal in this campaign was to starve Britain into submission.

e) Airplanes

First World War airplanes were usually flown by a single pilot, and could only stay airborne for an hour before refuelling. Unarmed airplanes were used to scout enemy positions behind the lines. Because both sides sent planes into the air, "dogfights" often occurred between rival pilots. During the First World War, airplanes were very much in the experimental stage, but they are worth studying because of the huge impact they would have in the next war.

D. LAND BATTLES

1. THE WESTERN FRONT

After the Battle of the Marne on the Western Front, Germany realized that the Schlieffen Plan had failed. Germany simply began a holding action in the trenches of the West, in order to concentrate on fighting the Russians in the East. The Western Front essentially became a **stalemate**. We have borrowed the term 'stalemate' from the game of chess. In chess a stalemate is declared when it become obvious that neither player has enough offensive power remaining on the board to achieve victory. Likewise the battle front was stalemated.

☞ a) The Battle of Ypres, April 1915

The **Battle of Ypres** in Belgium, was the first taste of trench warfare for Canadian troops. The French and Canadian troops that were defending Ypres and retreated when the Germans used chlorine gas against them—this was the first poison gas attack in history. This attack, perhaps more than anything else, acted as a precursor to the ugly manner in which twentieth century war would be fought. Over 6,000 Canadians lost their lives before reinforcements arrived. Lieutenant-Colonel John McCrae of Guelph, Ontario wrote the world-famous poem "*In Flanders Fields*" after the Battle of Ypres, in memory of a friend who had been killed. McCrae died of pneumonia in 1918, at the military hospital in France where he was in charge.

☞ b) The Battle of Verdun, February 1916

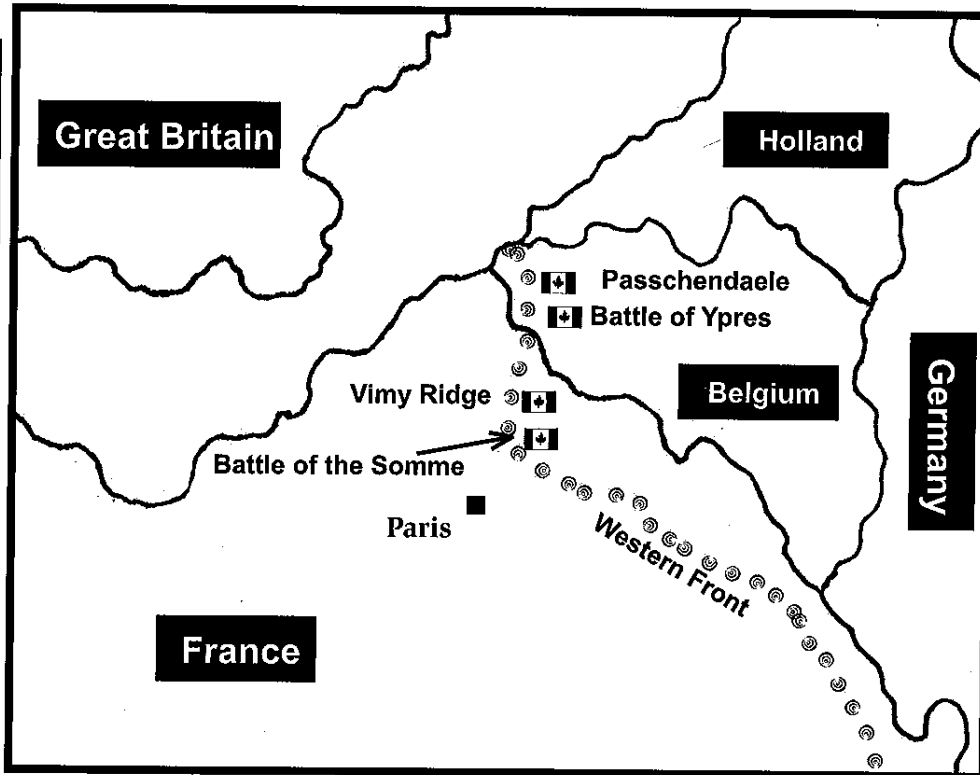
Germany attacked the French at the **Battle of Verdun**. The battle lasted for six months, and the French alone lost 500,000 men. This battle and the Battle of the Somme were the defining battles of the First World War. Each was deliberately planned to be a battle of attrition in which the attackers' strategy was to wear down the enemy. Many people claim that the French never recovered psychologically from the Battle of Verdun.

☞ c) The Battle of the Somme, July 1916

While the Germans were busy with the French at Verdun, Allied commanders tried to end trench warfare with a large attack on the German trenches at the **Battle of the Somme**. The attack was not successful. The

Germans were not driven back, and over 20,000 Canadian soldiers were killed. The Newfoundland Regiment suffered 90% casualties—every officer was either killed or hurt. When the Battle ended five months after it began, only a few miles of land had been gained, yet casualties for both

🇨🇦 Major Battles For Canadian Forces: Western Front



sides had reached 1.25 million. The Battle of the Somme was a disaster for a number of reasons:

- (i) The Allies' shells were too weak to penetrate German concrete bunkers buried deep underground.
- (ii) Underground explosions did not dislodge the wire protecting German trenches and therefore Allied troops became trapped.
- (iii) Allied troops were overloaded with 25-60 kilograms of gear.
- (iv) A nearby mine was detonated 10 minutes before the attack which warned the Germans, causing the Allies to lose the element of surprise.
- (v) The attack was delayed and occurred in broad daylight, rather than in dawn hours.
- (vi) The attack was ordered to continue despite heavy casualties.
- (vii) There were 23 Canadian men who were ordered "shot at dawn" because they would or could not return to the front. Men who suffered from **shell-shock** (a psychological condition that results from the stress of active warfare) faced court martial and then a firing squad. British Field Marshall Haig stated, "If we accepted pleas like this how would we

win the war?" Recently, the Canadian federal government has decided to pay tribute to those men who were executed. This decision will allow their names to be entered into the Book of Remembrance, which is on permanent display in the House of Commons.

d) The Battle of Vimy Ridge, April 1917

In October 1914, Vimy Ridge (in France near the Belgian border) fell into the hands of German soldiers. The ridge was important strategically because it was a strong natural fortress that was easy to defend, and very dangerous to attack. For the next two years, Allied armies tried to gain back the ridge. In April 1917, Canadian troops attacked the Germans at the **Battle of Vimy Ridge** (150,000 British and French troops had already died while trying to take the ridge before the Canadians arrived). The Allies had been bombing the ridge for three weeks in order to weaken German defences. Preparations for the attack were extremely thorough, and manoeuvres were practiced over and over. Even though the Canadian attack was well-planned and successful, Canadians suffered heavy losses with over 3,000 killed and 7,000 injured. This was a turning point of the war in favour of the Allies. The capture of Vimy Ridge was the first time in history that Canadian units fought together as one, independent of British forces, and this victory became a symbol of Canada's independence and nationhood. As a result of the success of Vimy Ridge and other battles, Canadian troops were soon recognized as some of the best troops on the Western Front. In June 1917, Canadian General Arthur Currie was promoted to replace British General Byng—this marked the end of British soldiers commanding Canadian troops.

e) The Battle of Passchendaele, October 1917

Allied advances bogged down in the mud of the Western Front at the **Battle of Passchendaele**. Canadian troops were asked to attack the Germans. Although General Currie said that the town of Passchendaele could not be taken because troops could not move through the mud, he was overruled and the Canadians were ordered to attack anyway. Not only did they take the town, but held it until reinforcements came. However, only one out of every five Canadians survived the battle—16,000 died needlessly—and the offensive gained only 7 kilometers of mud that the Germans soon won back.

2. THE EASTERN FRONT

While Canadian troops did not participate in the Eastern Front, it is important to briefly discuss the events on this front because they are important to the outcome the war.

a) The Russian Campaign, August 1914-1916

By August 1914, Russian troops were invading Germany. This was a surprise, as the Germans expected that they would be the ones to invade Russia first. They also did not expect that the Russians would be able to react to the declaration of war so quickly. Although the Germans were surprised by the Russian attack, they were able to defeat the Russians in a number of battles. However, German success against the Russians helped

to contribute to the stalemate on the Western front. (In order to defeat Russia, the Germans transferred troops from the Western front). The Germans continued to advance into Russia until 1916.

b) The Gallipoli Campaign, April 1915-December 1915

The Turks (part of the crumbling Ottoman Empire in the Balkans) entered the war on the side of the Central powers in an attempt to keep the Russians out of the straits of the **Gallipoli** peninsula (a water passage that would allow the Russians access to the Balkans and the Black Sea). Remember that Russia's primary objective in the war was to obtain an all-weather port for trading and strategic purposes. On the other hand, the British also wanted to control the Gallipoli peninsula in order to open a supply line to Russia, and allow Britain to attack Austria-Hungary and Germany from the Balkans. This battle turned out to be just another military disaster, much like those in Western Europe. It had little impact on the war except to further demoralize Allied forces. Most of the troops fighting for the Allies in this poorly-planned attack were from Australia. You can watch an excellent movie (called simply, *Gallipoli*, starring Mel Gibson) in which the folly of this attack is clearly documented.

E. WAR IN THE AIR

1. CANADIANS IN THE AIR

In 1914, the airplane was a new and unproven invention. Since Canada had no air force of its own, Canadians who wanted to fly joined the British Corps. By 1918, 40 % of British Air Force pilots were Canadian. Young men flocked to the air force because trench warfare offered no glory, and they were looking for an adventure. However, Germany had the upper hand in the air because its planes greatly outnumbered the British and the French.

2. AIR FIGHTING TECHNIQUES

Aerial duels between pilots were called **dogfights**. Planes dove on the enemy fighter aircraft from the rear and then fired. When a plane was hit the pilot was helpless, as parachutes were not introduced until late in the war. At the beginning of the war, bombing from airplanes was quite primitive. Pilots would literally carry bombs on their laps and throw them out of the open cockpit at the appropriate time. Later in the war, aerial bombardment became more sophisticated.

3. ROLE OF THE PILOT

The role of pilots in the First World War was quite romanticized. Pilots built a reputation based on their abilities to manoeuvre in the air. Germany's greatest ace Baron von Richthofen (famous for shooting down the most enemy planes) was known as the "Red Baron." A Canadian, Captain Roy Brown, became famous for shooting him down. **Billy Bishop**, another Canadian pilot, was Canada's top wartime ace—he shot down 72 enemy planes. As a result, Bishop was awarded the **Victoria Cross** (a British military honour for courage and bravery). You can easily find good biographies of Billy Bishop on the internet.

Many casualties of the war in the air were the result of mechanical failure. By late 1916, the average life of a pilot was only three weeks!



Billy Bishop

F. WAR AT SEA**1. COMMAND OF THE SEAS**

Germany knew that command of the seas was VERY important to Britain— Britain depended on its navy to keep the sea-lanes open for supplies and raw materials. When the war began, the British navy immediately chased the German navy out of the North Sea, and set up a blockade between Denmark and Norway/Sweden. As a result, the German surface fleet never entered the Atlantic. The Germans reacted by resorting to submarine warfare.

2. THE GERMAN U-BOATS

- a) In 1915, a German U-boat torpedoed and sank the British passenger ship, the **Lusitania**. In total 1,198 people drowned in panic and chaos. Of these victims, 128 were American. Many of these Americans were rich and powerful people. As a result, American public opinion began to turn against Germany. While it would be another two years before the Americans would join the war, it is important to note that the sinking of the Lusitania began the process of America coming out of isolation and becoming involved in world affairs.
- b) Although the German navy was no match for the British, they had submarines called **U-boats**. U-boats attacked British ships in an attempt to cut off the shipment of supplies to Britain. Germany warned the Allies that it would sink all ships in enemy waters without warning. By 1917, the German attacks on Allied shipping had left Britain dangerously low on many of the resources needed to continue the war. From the German point of view the war was dragging on too long, so Germany decided to introduce a policy of unrestricted submarine warfare. The application of this policy in February 1917 would see U-boats sinking any ship approaching Britain. Previously, only ships from allied countries were attacked. In four months, U-boats sank over 1,000 Allied ships.
- c) The **Convoy System** was designed to protect Allied supply ships from German U-boats. The supply ships were escorted by armed destroyers that surrounded the fleet. This strategy effectively ended the threat of the German U-boats.

3. WHY THE U.S.A. ENTERED THE WAR

- a) The 1915 sinking of the Lusitania.
- b) In February 1917, the German decision to implement unrestricted submarine warfare made American ships targets.
- c) In early 1917, the Americans learned that Germany was encouraging Mexico to attack the United States. The Germans promised to help the Mexicans in such an attack. The United States discovered this plan when the British intercepted the infamous Zimmerman Telegram, which outlined the scheme. The British were only too eager to share this information with the United States because they were sure this would finally bring the United States into the war, and thereby give the Allies a huge advantage.

In April 1917, the United States declared war on Germany. While it would take another eight months for the American troops to arrive in Europe, this declaration was the major turning point in the war.

G. THE END OF THE WAR**1. EVENTS IN RUSSIA**

In March 1917, Tsar Nicholas and the autocracy in Russia were overthrown in a relatively peaceful revolution. An emergent democracy, called the Provisional Government, took over. Because this new government continued the unsuccessful war against the Germans, it too, was overthrown in October 1917. The Bolsheviks (communists), led by Vladimir Lenin, took over. Lenin almost immediately opened peace negotiations with the Germans. As part of the peace negotiations, Russia gave Germany all of Poland, Lithuania and the Ukraine. The **Treaty of Brest-Litovsk** between Germany and Russia took Russia out of the war, and Germany was left with only a one-front war.

2. Despite losing Russia, the Allied side remained strong because the United States had joined the war. German leaders realized that they were in crisis. Germany's allies, Austria-Hungary and Turkey, were on the point of collapse.

3. Germany's only hope was to launch a mighty offensive before the American Army could arrive in Europe with any strength. While the United States was by far the most powerful industrial nation on earth, it did not have a large standing army and needed about eight months to train. It was this window of opportunity that the Germans were trying to exploit.

4. Thousands of German soldiers were stopped just short of Paris. The Allied effort that finally broke the back of the German military was called the **Hundred Days**. For six weeks, Canadians were at the forefront of the Allied advance against the Germans. The term the Hundred Days has special meaning for Canadians. It was during these last 100 days of the war that Canadian troops were in the forefront of the most difficult tasks of dislodging the Germans from their defensive positions. At crucial sites like Mons and Amiens as well as breaking the Germans main line of defense (called the Hindenburg Line) Canadian troops were assigned the task of leading the charge. It was well known on the German front lines that the troops they most hated to face were from Canada. Eventually the Allies won back France, and then Belgium. The fighting stopped when the Allies reached the German border.

5. On November 11, 1918, Germany formally surrendered. To this day, we in Canada and many other former allies stop each year on November 11 to remember the sacrifices of those who fought and died in this and other wars.

IV. THE WAR ON HOME THE HOME FRONT**A. SACRIFICE**

In order to finance the war effort, cost-saving measures needed to be implemented at home in Canada. Canadians were faced with food **rations**, and mandatory waste reduction was introduced. In farming areas students were dismissed from school early to help bring in the harvests. Daylight savings time was introduced to save on energy consumption. Additionally, people organized community fund raisers to help fund the war effort.

B. HALIFAX EXPLOSION, 1917

1. The **Halifax Explosion of 1917** brought the bloodshed of the war in Europe right here to Canadian soil. A French munitions ship carrying 3,000 tonnes of explosives collided with another vessel in the Halifax harbour.
2. The blast levelled large sections of Halifax, fires roared through the city, and a huge tidal wave tossed other ships in pieces onto the shore. Over 2,000 people were killed, and thousands were injured or left homeless.
3. Boston donated over \$3 million in relief supplies to help the city of Halifax. In total, \$30 million dollars was collected from around the world to help rebuild the city. To this day, in order to celebrate American generosity, a special Christmas tree is shipped from Nova Scotia to Boston each year.

C. ENEMY ALIENS

1. When war broke out in Europe, the Canadian government was faced with the question of what to do with the 500,000 German, Austrian, and Hungarian people (**enemy aliens**) who were residents, and even citizens of Canada at the time. Because Canada was at war with people from these countries in Europe, there were fears of sabotage, and suspicions about spies here in Canada. People demanded that the enemy aliens be fired from their jobs and locked up.
2. In response, the Canadian government used the **War Measures Act** to place restrictions on enemy aliens. Enemy aliens could be arrested or searched, and many were sent to internment camps in remote areas. The majority of people who were interned were Ukrainians.
3. Under the War Measures Act, the government also introduced **ensorship**. That is, it banned the publication of books and magazines in enemy languages. These measures were taken to try to protect Canada from the “enemies” living within its own borders.

D. ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

1. During the war, food and fuel became scarce and prices soared. During the winter of 1918, schools and factories closed because they had no heating. Government officials introduced “Meatless Mondays” and “Fuelless Sundays.”
2. **Honour rationing** was introduced. People limited themselves to a pound and a half of butter and two pounds of sugar a month. There was also a ban on the sale and drinking of alcohol.
3. The war was costing Canada over \$1 million a day. The Canadian government launched a campaign to encourage Canadians to buy **Victory Bonds**. Citizens who bought bonds were lending money to the government for the war effort. After the war, the bonds could be cashed in for a profit.
4. In 1917, **income tax** was introduced for the first time—yet another measure to help pay for the war. It was intended to be a temporary measure, although Canadians continue to pay income tax to this day!

E. THE ECONOMY

During the war, Canadian debt increased dramatically in order to finance wartime production. After war was declared, factories quickly retooled to produce war supplies. The government urged farmers to produce as much as they could, and, therefore, Canada’s economy boomed until the end of the war.

F. CONSCRIPTION

1. By 1917, volunteer enlistments were not keeping up with the number of men killed or wounded. Therefore, **conscription** (compulsory military service) was proposed.
2. Canada was deeply divided over the issue. Many English-Canadians believed that Quebec was not doing its part to support the war. However, many Quebecois were essential as farmers, and also did not feel the same ties as the Anglophones (English speakers) did towards the British. Furthermore, the French population of Canada had long ago broken their cultural and sentimental ties with France. Also, because French language rights had been taken away in many provincial schools, French-Canadians also felt they were being treated like second-class citizens in Canada. To make matters worse, the Minister of the Militia also appointed a Protestant clergyman to supervise recruiting (Quebecois were mostly Catholics), and the training programs in Quebec were all in English. This caused long-term resentment in Quebec.
3. Prime Minister Borden introduced the **Military Service Bill** in 1917, which made conscription compulsory for all males between the ages of 20 and 35. Only men vital in wartime production jobs, those who were sick, or **conscientious objectors / pacifists** (those for whom fighting was against religious beliefs) were not forced to join. In response, there were riots in Montreal and Quebec City against conscription.
4. On the other hand, because many people saw support of the war effort as a moral duty, they felt justified in putting down those who did not fulfil this duty. They were seen as “slackers” or “shirkers.” Resentment increased against pacifists who were against the war on the basis of spiritual or moral beliefs. These people faced hostility and ridicule.
5. The issue of conscription also affected Canadian politics. During the conscription crisis in 1917, Prime Minister Borden invited Wilfred Laurier and the Liberals to join with his party, the Conservatives, to form a union (coalition) government to demonstrate Canada’s commitment to winning the war. Laurier refused to join with the Conservatives because the Liberal party was deeply opposed to conscription. As a result, the 1917 election was fought largely on the issue of conscription. French-Canadian nationalist, Henri Bourassa, led a campaign against conscription. Although the **Union Government** (the Conservatives with a few English-speaking Liberals) won the most seats, the Liberals won 57% of the popular vote (refer to page 23 for a definition of popular vote).
6. The conscription crisis exacerbated an already tense situation between French and English Canadians.

G. NEW ROLES FOR WOMEN

1. During the First World War hundreds of women volunteered to work overseas as nurses or ambulance drivers. At home, the number of women employed in industry, in banks, and on police forces increased dramatically. These jobs would have been considered unsuitable for women before 1914.
2. Since women were doing so much to help the war effort, they also wanted a share in making decisions about the country. Women began to organize themselves to gain the right to vote. Members of this movement were called **suffragettes**.

3. In 1916, women were granted the right to vote in most provinces. In 1917, the **Wartime Elections Act** granted the federal vote to the mothers, sisters, and wives of soldiers in the Armed Forces. By the end of the war, the right to vote in Federal Elections had been granted to almost all women in Canada over the age of 21. On the other hand, aboriginal women and most aboriginal men, Asians, and many other minority groups were still not granted the right to vote in Canadian federal elections.

H. PROPAGANDA

1. **Propaganda** is any strategy used to persuade people to believe in a certain idea. In the First World War, propaganda was used to persuade people to join the Armed Forces, and to influence how people felt about the war. For example, enlistment posters were used to recruit people to join the Armed Forces, and to encourage people to vote for the Union government in the 1917 election.
2. As television was not yet invented and radios were rare, people depended on newspapers for any news of events overseas. Because the government did not want people at home to hear about the number of casualties killed overseas, they set up a press bureau to control what was printed in newspapers. This act of preventing people from reading about the truth of what was happening was a form of censorship.

V. THE LEGACY OF WAR

The First World War had been “the war to end all wars.” If we look ahead a mere two decades we quickly realize that this little catch phrase was a gross miscalculation. The hostilities of the First World War ended with an **armistice** signed on November 11th 1918. (In general terms, an armistice is an agreement amongst warring countries to stop fighting and move to a peace conference.) Early in the next year, the delegates from the belligerents (countries who participated in the war) met in Paris to discuss the peace terms. As had been common for centuries of warfare, the victors would set the terms of the peace. The task at Paris was daunting. The First World War had put an end to an era. The peacemakers were determined to design an international system, which would begin a new era that would make another war unlikely.

A. BUILDING THE PEACE

1. FOURTEEN POINTS

In January 1918, **President Woodrow Wilson** of the United States released a document called the **Fourteen Points**. Originally this document was presented to convince the American people that the sacrifices made during the war were justified. Wilson then took the same fourteen points to Paris and tried to convince the Europeans that these points could be the basis for a lasting peace. The points fell into two categories:

a) Group One

Points one through five refer to Wilson’s new idea about how countries should work together. This idea was called **internationalism**. However, in order for internationalism to be accepted, it would be necessary for countries to put aside their selfish feelings (nationalism) and also, for ethnic groups to be allowed to create new countries based upon their nationalist desires (this was called self-determination).

b) Group Two

Points six through eight refer to the way with which the German conquered lands should be dealt. Points nine through fourteen refer to the ethnic desires of the people living in Central and Eastern Europe; this section would give the Czechs, Slovaks, Serbs, Croats and Poles a homeland. President Wilson recognized that these people must be given homelands, and that this process must be fair in order for the region to avoid further conflicts. Wilson made it clear that the Austro-Hungarian empire should cease to exist.

2. THE PARIS PEACE CONFERENCES—THE TREATY OF VERSAILLES

The **Treaty of Versailles** is perhaps the most important international agreement of the twentieth century. After the war, representatives from the Allied Powers (Britain, France, the United States, and Canada) met at the **Paris Peace Conferences** in early 1919, in order to decide what was going to happen to the defeated countries (Germany and Austria-Hungary). This task was tremendously difficult—the goal was to create an agreement that would prevent another war from occurring. There were several different ideas about how to achieve this goal.

a) Realism vs. Idealism

People who were **realists** believed that Germany should be dealt with very harshly so that it would be physically unable to go to war again. On the other hand, **idealists** argued that punishing Germany would cause the Germans to feel bitter, which may cause them to seek revenge. The realists believed that the peace should be based on honourable principles. President Woodrow Wilson of the United States was an idealist, and Prime Minister Georges Clemenceau of France was a realist. These two men represented the two “camps” at Paris. Prime Minister David Lloyd George of Britain fell somewhere in between. Because France is located next to Germany, it makes some sense that France would have wanted to cripple Germany. Additionally, France held a desire for revenge. Britain wanted revenge as well, and also wanted Germany to pay (called **reparations**) for the damage caused by the war. However, Britain did not want to cripple Germany entirely because Britain was interested in trading with Germany in the future. In the end, the treaty that was signed was a compromise—arguably the worst of both worlds. There were two very important ideas that emerged:

(i) Self-determination

Self-determination meant that ethnic groups would vote on the issue of whom they would prefer to live with or to be governed by. While this idea seemed to work in theory, it was very difficult to apply. In order to completely implement self-determination, it was necessary to create homelands for all of the different ethnic groups in Europe. You can imagine how challenging it would be to find a piece of land for all of the different groups—especially given the fact that countries and borders already existed in Europe. Therefore, the most remarkable achievement of self-determination was the creation of two new states: Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia. On the other hand, President

Wilson did not expect that the German people would have a right to self-determination, and, in reality, there were also some other significant groups that were not given self-determination. (In other words, these groups were not given a homeland, but rather, they were forced to live in another country). As this course progresses, you will see how the unfulfilled promise of self-determination led to future conflict. The following is a brief list of some of the exceptions to the application of self-determination:

- The Sudeten Germans in Czechoslovakia
- The roughly one million Poles in Czechoslovakia
- The Germans in the Polish Corridor
- The 50-50 split of Germans and French people in Alsace-Lorraine
- The Irish

(ii) The War Guilt Clause

Another part of the Treaty of Versailles was the **War Guilt Clause** which stated that Germany alone must accept responsibility for causing the war. This clause was included to justify the punishments that the allies wanted to inflict against Germany. This statement caused German people to protest, and the German Chancellor to resign. German sailors scuttled (sank) the German fleet so that it would not fall into the hands of the Allies. However, none of these protests worked. Germany was told that it must sign the Treaty of Versailles or else the Allies would resume hostilities.

b) Summary of Provisions of the Treaty of Versailles

(i) The War Guilt Clause

(ii) Alsace-Lorraine was returned to France.

(iii) Poland was given a strip of land (taken from Germany) to create access to the sea. This strip of land was known as the Polish Corridor.

(iv) Germany, along with the other Central Powers, was forced to surrender all of its colonies to the League of Nations.

(v) The German army was limited to 100,000 men; its navy and air force were also severely restricted in size.

(vi) Germany was forced to surrender its entire merchant fleet as compensation to the Allies for shipping losses during the war.

(vii) The west bank of the Rhine River Valley ((on the border between France and Germany) was to be de-militarized. Allied armies were to occupy the west bank of the Rhine for 15 years. Students should note that the Rhineland remained a part of Germany, but Germany was not allowed any military installations in that region. This type of region is known as a buffer zone.

(viii) Unification between Austria and Germany was forbidden.

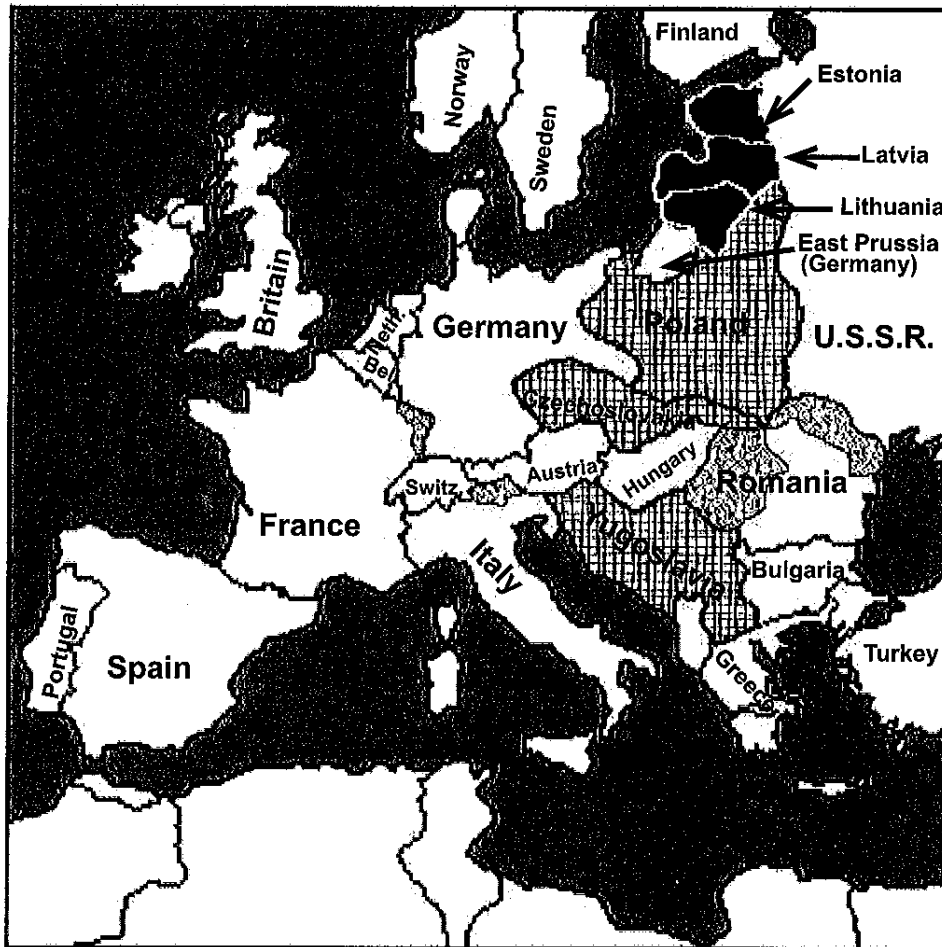
(iv) The constitution of the League of Nations was to be included as a part of the Treaty.




c) Failures of the Treaty of Versailles

It is easy to see that the Treaty of Versailles had many shortcomings, and in fact, we will see how it helped to cause the Second World War. For

example, several groups of people were left without a homeland, which meant that there were still strong feelings of nationalism, and, as we saw before, nationalism can often lead people to war. Additionally, Germany was crippled by the Treaty of Versailles. German people were very angry that they were blamed for the war and that they would have to pay extreme penalties for "starting" the war. Germany was not prepared to accept this humiliation, and we will soon see how Germany attempted to get revenge. Adolph Hitler would use this aspect of the treaty to appeal to the German people to help him overthrow the new German government, and thus, one of the major causes of the Second World War, was the treaty which ended the First World War.

Territorial Changes as a Result of the First World War



-  New countries created as a result of the war.
-  New countries gaining independence from Russia
-  Territories transferred as a result of the war

B. EFFECTS OF THE WAR**1. INTERNATIONAL EFFECTS**

- a) While different sources provide varying numbers, it is safe to say that approximately ten million people died in battle, while almost 20 million are listed as additional casualties (i.e., they were wounded). These figures do not include those who died as a result of the dislocation caused by such a massive war. In Russia, for example, untold millions of civilians died of starvation because the war so interrupted the production and distribution of food.
- b) The war cost \$200 billion, which left much of Europe near bankruptcy. In today's dollars this figure represents a number well into the trillions.
- c) The Ottoman Empire disintegrated.
- d) Austria-Hungary disintegrated, which resulted in the creation of Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia as well as a larger Romania and Bulgaria.
- e) Poland emerged as an independent nation (formerly under Russian control, and then briefly under German control).
- f) Three governments that were ruled by kings were replaced by democratic types of government—in Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Turkey. During the war Russia became the world's first communist country.
- g) As a result of the Treaty of Versailles, Germany was forced to pay for all of the damages caused by the war, and was forced to admit that it was to blame for the war.
- h) Many refugees in Europe fled their homelands and located in other areas.

2. EFFECTS OF THE WAR IN CANADA

The Canadian experience during the First World War can best be summarized as a nation "coming to maturity." In business, government, and of course militarily, Canada matured rapidly. Before the war, Canada, in the view of many, still belonged to Britain. Because of Canada's contribution to the Allied war effort a process was started that would see Canada become an independent nation. The list below presents some of the major changes which affected Canada:

- a) At the Paris peace conferences Canada was given a separate seat and a separate signature from Britain. Eventually Canada was given a separate seat in the League of Nations, which later became the United Nations.
- b) Women gained recognition as workers during the war, as they were able to work at jobs traditionally held by men. As a result, Canadian women gained the federal vote in 1917.
- c) Canadian troops gained world recognition for battle victories (Vimy Ridge and Passchendaele).
- d) After the war, Canada's population increased due to immigration.
- e) Canada also experienced significant economic growth during and after the war.
- f) The war cost the Canadian government \$3 billion dollars—Canada's national debt was \$150 million per year for four years.
- g) In order to pay off the debt, the Canadian government introduced income tax as a temporary measure in 1917. However, income tax is still being collected to this day.

- h) Over 60,000 Canadians were killed in action, and 178,000 Canadians were wounded.
- i) The issue of conscription deepened the differences between French and English Canadians.

3. THE CHANGING MAP OF EUROPE (SEE MAP ON PAGE 62)

The peace agreements at Paris completely re-drew the map of Eastern Europe. The ideas at Paris which led to these changes were self-determination (especially in central and eastern Europe), the notion that territories acquired through conquest should be returned, and the decision that the victors would "write the rules" (e.g. Alsace-Lorraine returned to France). German interests were completely ignored when Poland was given access to the sea by creating the Polish Corridor out of German territory; Czechoslovakia was created and held over 2.5 million Germans; and Alsace-Lorraine was returned to France. Although these changes were certainly not the primary cause of the Second World War, they did help to create a mind set among the German people which made war more likely. The map on page 62 reflects the changes made to the map on page 52 of this chapter.

See the next page for an outline of the "must know" material referred to on the title page of this chapter.

MUST KNOW LIST

Unless otherwise specified, all sub-headings that fall under the sections listed below should also be considered as "Must Know."

I. CAUSES OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR

- B. IMPERIALISM
- C. MILITARISM
- D. NATIONALISM
- E. ALLIANCES

II. CANADA GOES TO WAR

III. WAR IN EUROPE

- A. STALEMATE
- B. TRENCH WARFARE
- C. THE CHANGING FACE OF WAR
 - 1. NEW TYPES OF FIGHTING
- D. LAND BATTLES
 - 1. THE WESTERN FRONT
 - a) The Battle of Ypres, April 1915
 - b) The Battle of Verdun, February 1916
 - c) The Battle of the Somme, July 1916
 - d) The Battle of Vimy Ridge, April 1917
 - e) The Battle of Passchendaele, October 1917
- E. WAR IN THE AIR
 - 1. CANADIANS IN THE AIR
 - 3. ROLE OF THE PILOT

IV. THE WAR AT HOME

V. LEGACY OF WAR

- A. BUILDING THE PEACE
 - 2. THE PARIS PEACE CONFERENCES
- B. EFFECTS OF THE WAR
 - 2. EFFECTS OF THE WAR IN CANADA

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