

## **1. War on the Western Front**

### **1.1 - Reasons for Stalemate**

#### **1.1.1 - Schlieffen Plan**

- relied on swift takeover of Belgium (didn't happen)
- 42 day deadline unreasonable
- german army unfamiliar with defensive warfare
- troops didn't sweep wide enough
- didn't expect British resistance
- reserve German soldiers were not trained
- russia mobilised in 2 weeks instead of the expected 6
- plan neglected foreign policy regarding Belgium's neutrality (Treaty of London 1839)
- failure to capture channel ports (which ones?)

#### **1.1.2 - Plan XVII**

- underestimation of German forces, specifically at Alsace-Lorraine
- insufficient forces
- commanders focused on offensive attacks
- British and Belgium maintained small armies

#### **1.1.3 - Leadership**

- Deviations from plans
  - Von Moltke moved forces
- French commanders were incompetent
- poor communication; used pigeons which took 24-48 hours, therefore confusion

#### **1.1.4 - New Technology**

- commanders selected wrong tactics
- muddy and wet conditions hindered movement (both plans relied on swift movements)
- logistic planning became complicated due to railways
- Vickers machine gun forced soldiers to 'dig in'

### **1.2 - Nature of Trench Warfare**

#### **1.2.1 - Living Conditions**

- Disease: trenchfoot, hypothermia, gangrene, shellshock
- Environment: small animals, constant noise, claustrophobic
- Shellshock
- 2 week rotations
- Trench Dimensions
  1. 3m deep, 2m wide
  2. 2490km of trenches
  3. Average distance between oppositions 500m
  4. 700km from Belgian Coast to Swiss Border

#### **1.2.2 - Fighting Conditions**

- Weapons
  1. Artillery - inaccurate
  2. Bayonets - little use
  3. Flamethrower - fear
  4. Grenades - useful when combined, Aus. vs Ger. Pozières July 1916
  5. Machine Guns - brits used in attack, Germans defense (nested cradles)
  6. Gas - 2nd Battle of Ypres 1915

7. Rifle - effectiveness depended on skill of user, caused problems later
8. Tanks - Battle of Cambrai November 1917
9. Mortars

### **1.3 - Strategies and Tactics**

#### **1.3.1 - Verdun: Feb-Nov 1916**

- Strategies
  1. Artillery bombardment, 10 mil. shells used
  2. Assault barrage, little success
- Largest battle of war, 900,000 casualties
- Symbol of french resistance, will

#### **1.3.2 - Somme: Jul-Nov 1916**

- Strategies
  1. creeping barrage, only 9/49 tanks arrived, 10% of deaths were friendly fire
- diversion from Verdun
- 4 german division diverted from Verdun
- only 8-12 km gained in fighting

#### **1.3.3 - Passchendaele: Jul-Nov 1917**

- Strategies:
  1. Creeping Barrage (limited success)
  2. Bite and Hold

### **1.4 - Changing Attitudes of British and German Soldiers**

#### **1.4.1A - 1914 Belief, Enthusiasm Britain**

- very positive
- mass enlistment, no need for conscription
- patriotic and peer pressured environment

#### **1.4.1B - 1914 Belief, Enthusiasm Germany**

- mass enlistment
- expected early victory

#### **1.4.2A - 1915/16 Bitterness Britain**

- introduction of conscription lowered morale
- futility of trench warfare
- motivations shifted from patriotism to survival (also affected Germans)

#### **1.4.2B - 1915/16 Bitterness Germany**

- food shortages
- similar to British

#### **1.4.3A - 1917 Hatred, Mutiny Britain**

- war weariness
- detachment from soldiers; General Douglas Haig never even visited trenches!
- mutiny not as bad
- American involvement boosted morale
- French mutiny at Nivelle May 1917

#### **1.4.3B - 1917 Hatred, Mutiny Germany**

- major strikes at naval ports
  1. Kiel November 1918
  2. Wilhelmshaven October 1918
- disillusioned trench experiences
- home front collapsing

#### 1.4.4A - 1918 Re-enthused Britain

- initial success of Spring offensive is troubling
- American aid, counter offensive, puts victory in sight

#### 1.4.4B - 1918 Re-enthused Germany

- Eastern front victory gives momentum to Spring offensive
- home front ruins them

## **2. Home Fronts in Britain and Germany**

### **2.1 - Total War [a government's mobilisation of all its resources to support the efforts of its own troops and undermine those of its opponents]**

#### 2.1.1A - Social Impact Britain

- Defence of the Realm Act 1914 meant gov could interfere with ordinary life, impose restrictions
- high morale; civilians often mobilised themselves
- rationing 1918

#### 2.1.1B - Social Impact Germany

- Auxiliary Services Law 1916, all men 17-60 (later women, PoW, etc)
- starvation epidemic: 260,000 deaths in 1917 alone

#### 2.1.2A - Economic Impact Britain

- Defence of the Realm Act 1914 - oversaw all economic activity
- Munitions of War Act 1915 - ministry controlled all labour matters
- rent control 1915, price control 1917
- Inflation (find statistic)

#### 2.1.2B - Economic Impact Germany

- Kriegswirtschaft (war economy) controlled supply of materials
- Kriegsamts (war office) controlled all labour and manufacturing

### **2.2 - Recruitment, Conscription, Censorship, Propaganda**

#### 2.2.1A - Recruitment and Conscription Britain

- enrolment initially through peer pressure (impress women, adventure, etc)
- 1.34 million enrolled by 1915
- conscription introduced, Military Services Act 1916

#### 2.2.1B - Recruitment and Conscription Germany

- conscription been around for decades - 94 divisions + millions of reserves
- Martial Law declared 1914

#### 2.2.2A - Censorship and Propaganda Britain

- purposes of propaganda
  1. gain support of neutral states
  2. encourage involvement in the war
  3. justify Britain's position
  4. encourage USA entry
  5. gain awareness of German spies
- methods of propaganda
  1. stereotypes - germans are barbarians
  2. not using proper words - germans are "huns" or "the boche"
  3. strong assertions, not much evidence
  4. repetitive

### 2.2.2B - Censorship and Propaganda Germany

- Anti-British
  1. promote anti-English sentiment
  2. blame all problems on Naval blockade
  3. all english aspects (street names etc) of life terminated
- German Defensive
  1. Justify violating Belgian neutrality
  2. Portray German soldiers as heroes
  3. Conceptual truth, not real truth
- Effectiveness
  - often condescending and elitist
  - poor international response
- Censorship
  - all information controlled by authorities
  - used to keep/boost morale

## 2.3 - Changing Attitudes Over Time

### 2.3.1A - Early Response Britain

- Vast majority welcomed war
- Little difficulty encouraging men to enlist
- Only opposition: socialists (Keir Hardie and Ramsay MacDonald)
- Support remained strong into 1915

### 2.3.1B - Early Response Germany

- patriotism + authoritarian government resulted in large scale support for war
- most German socialists dropped pacifist ideals and supported war
- 1916 Auxiliary Services Law meant unions were recognised - boosted support

### 2.3.2A - Appearance of Opposition Britain

- Slaughters of 1916/7 (Verdun, Somme, etc) prompted doubts
- Compared to other nations (mainly Russia) growth of opp was slow

### 2.3.2B - Appearance of Opposition Germany

- early opponents of war were put in prison
- middle class German Peace Society - quickly died out
- George Grosz, intellectual, imprisoned for dissent

### 2.3.3A - Growth of Opposition Britain

1. Causes of growth
  - Continual carnage on front, futility
  - lack of compassion from generals
  - war weariness; growing casualty lists, shortages worsened, labour demands worsened
  - Zeppelin raids **(add detail dates etc.)**
  - German submarine campaign February 1917
2. Sources of Opposition
  - Herald League
  - Workers Socialist Foundation
  - Union of Democratic Control (1914)
  - No Conscription Fellowship (1915)
  - National Council Against Conscription
  - Conscientious Objectors (refusal to be conscripted) - only 16,100 men
  - Economic opposition

### 2.3.3B - Growth of Opposition Germany

1. Causes of Opposition
  - longevity of war
  - endless casualties
  - apparent futility
  - wartime inflation
  - deterioration of working conditions
  - lack of attention to workers welfare
2. Sources of Opposition
  - newspapers/magazines - *The Berliner Tagblatt* and *Frankfurter Zeitung*
  - 60,000 person protest May 1st 1916
  - 300,000 workers on strike + violent disturbances April 1917
  - January 1918 1 million workers on strike

## 2.4 - Impact of War on the Lives of Women (Britain Only)

### 2.4.1 - Female Work Force

1. Munitions Industry
  - By July 1918, 80% of munitions workers were female
  - 12 hours shifts
  - death from explosions + TNT poisoning
  - most persisted because pay was better than domestic service
2. Other Industry
  - at first work was voluntary
  - overcame social prejudices
  - agriculture: by 1918 Women's Land Army totalled 16,000+
  - variety of jobs (blacksmith, managers, drivers, etc)

### 2.4.2 - Women in Armed Services

1. Women's Army Auxiliary Corps - 57,000
2. Women's Royal Air Force - 32,000
3. Women's Royal Naval Service - 3,000

### 2.4.3 - Advancements in Women's Rights

1. Trade Unions
  - Unions resisted female participation
  - Unions assumed women should be paid less
  - Unions assumed women would leave jobs when men returned
  - Women entered unions regardless
  - 383 trade unions contained female members
  - 36 women-only unions
2. Suffragette Movement
  - suffragette campaign suspended during war time to assist war effort
  - Representation of the People Act 1918
  - Act granted vote to women 30 y.o. with a household or married to a household
  - Therefore, the women who actually ended up voting were rich upper class. Whilst many think the Act was a reward for the women who worked during the war there is an obvious incongruence as the upper class ones generally did not work in factories

### 2.4.4 - Social Impact of War on Women

- middle class women were more more literate and therefore their accounts are better recorded
- women became recognised as essential part of economy
- employment figures are deceptive
- 1921 employment rates were less than 1914

- Restoration of Pre-War Practices Act 1919 took jobs from working class women
- Sex Discrimination (Removal) Act 1919 made it easier to be a woman in workforce, but only for upper/middle class

### **3. Turning Points**

#### **3.1 - Impact of US Entry and Russian Withdrawal**

##### **3.1.1 - Pros/Cons US Entry - April 1917**

- Pros
  1. Huge resources
  2. Fresh legs
  3. Enthusiasm
  4. Newer tactics
- Cons
  1. Idealistic
  2. Offshore, transporting

##### **3.1.2 - Pros/Cons Russian Withdrawal - October 1917**

- Pros
  1. Focus on home front
- Cons
  1. loss of morale
  2. lost Eastern front, can't surround Germany

#### **3.2 - Ludendorff's Spring Offensive/ Allied Response**

##### **3.2.1 - Spring Offensive**

- March-July 1918
- Treaty of Brest-Litovsk mends relationships with Russia
- Operation Michael, 38,000 Br. casualties in first day
- 5 major offensives
- by April; huge gains, 1000 guns, 100000 PoW
- Late July, turning point, 1 million German casualties

##### **3.2.2 - Allied Response**

- Allies united under command of General Ferdinand Foch
- Official begin August 8
- Effectiveness of Americans, win at Belleau Wood (June)
- August 8 - Black Day for Germans
  - 600 vehicles
  - 800 aircraft
  - 600 artillery guns
  - all used by Allies
- By September 2 million US troops entered

### **4. Allied Victory**

#### **4.1 - Events Leading to Armistice 1918**

1. October 1 - Prince Maximilian of Baden becomes chancellor.
2. October 2 - Ludendorff delivers speech to Reichstag explaining why defeat
3. October 12-19 - Austrian forces defeated in Trentino, Piave, Romania

4. October 21 - Germany ends unrestricted submarine warfare
5. October 26 - Ludendorff resigns
6. November 3 - Naval mutiny at Kiel, Austria and Hungary agree to armistice
7. November 9 - Kaiser Wilhelm resigns: Germany declared republic
8. November 10 - socialist government (The Council of People's Commissioners) established in Germany
9. November 11 - Austrian Emperor Charles abdicates, Germany sign armistice at 11am

## **4.2 - Reasons for Victory / German Collapse**

### **4.2.1 - Failure of Schlieffen Plan and Spring Offensive**

- two front war = weakened forces
- failed to take advantage of Russian withdrawal
- superior quantity of Allied resources
- everything exhausted after 1918 spring offensive

### **4.2.2 - Decline of German Homefront**

- Allied blockade 1914 destroyed German economy
- lack of key imports (eg?) led to major strains by 1916 (stat?)
- inflation, shortages (eg. )

### **4.2.3 - Arrival of USA**

- gamble that submarine could defeat Britain before USA arrival failed
- USA forces lander during spring offensive

### **4.2.4 - Leadership**

1. Allied
  - out of touch generals replaced with officers with field experience (eg?)
  - better use of tanks: eg. Battle of Hamel 1918 led by Gen. John Monash, creeping barrage/coordinated assault
2. German
  - Ludendorff failed to develop tanks warfare
  - no contingency plans

## **4.3 - Roles and Goals at Versailles**

### **4.3.1 - Clemenceau (France)**

- insisted Germany remained a threat
- held Germany accountable for devastating France, 1.4 mil dead

### **4.3.2 - Lloyd George (Britain)**

- personally not in favour of punishing Germany
- but election promises meant he had to punish
- wanted justice and compensation for Allies

### **4.3.3 - Wilson (USA)**

- depicted as naïve humanitarian
- Germany signed under Wilson's 14 pt plan. All points scrapped bar League of Nations
- LoN: international open forum
- International Court of Justice
- wanted justice and compensation for Allies