

# UNIT 6

## THE TWENTIETH CENTURY: A WORLD AT WAR

Wright Brothers  
make first successful  
airplane flight  
**1903**

**1914-1918**  
World War I

*The Humanist Manifesto* is  
published / Hitler comes to  
power in Germany  
**1933**

**1939-1945**  
World War II

1900

1910

1920

1930

1940

**1905**  
Albert Einstein  
develops special  
theory of relativity

**1912**  
Freud publishes  
his ideas on the  
subconscious mind/  
*Titanic* sinks

**1917**  
Bolshevik Revolution/Lenin  
establishes Communist  
dictatorship in Russia

**1919**  
Treaty of Versailles / League of  
Nations established

**1922**  
Lenin creates the  
Soviet Union/  
Mussolini comes  
to power in Italy

**1927**  
Stalin  
comes to  
power in  
Russia

**1928**  
Paris  
Peace  
Pact

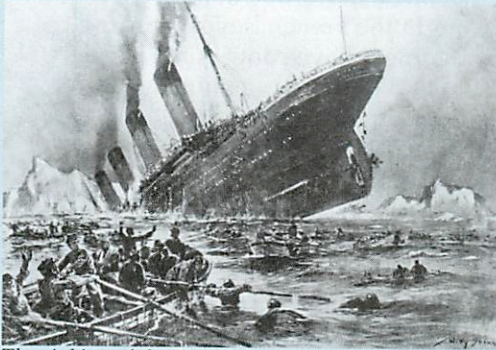
**1931**  
Japan  
invades  
Manchuria

**1929-1939**  
Great Depression

**1936-1939**  
Spanish Civil War

**1941**  
Japan bombs U.S.  
Pacific Fleet at Pearl  
Harbor

**1945**  
First atomic bombs  
dropped on Japan/  
United Nations founded



*The sinking of the Titanic*



*Winston Churchill*



*Adolf Hitler*

*Mushroom cloud  
over Hiroshima,  
Japan, after atomic  
bomb blast*



*Flag of the  
Soviet Union*



*Nikolai Lenin*

*The Battle of Britain  
by Commodore Hood of the RAF*



# 22 World War I

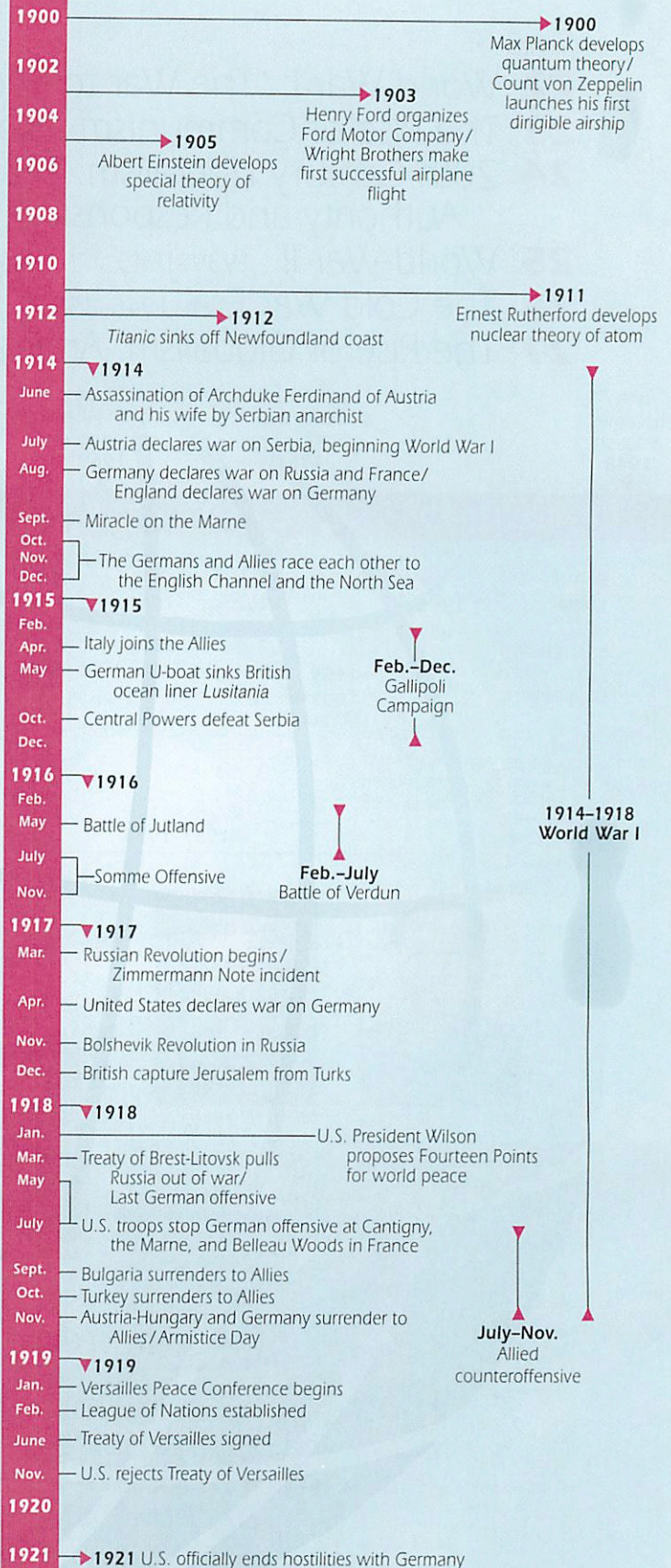
“The War to End All Wars”  
1914–1918

And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

—Matthew 24:6

## Chapter Outline

- I. A New Century
  - A. Science and Technology Advance
  - B. The Road to War
  - C. The Great War Begins
- II. The Course of the War
  - A. The Western Front, 1914–1916
  - B. Other Fronts
  - C. The War at Sea and in the Air
  - D. The Western Front 1917–1918
- III. The Peace That Failed
  - A. The Aftermath of War
  - B. President Wilson’s Plan for Peace
  - C. The Versailles Peace Conference

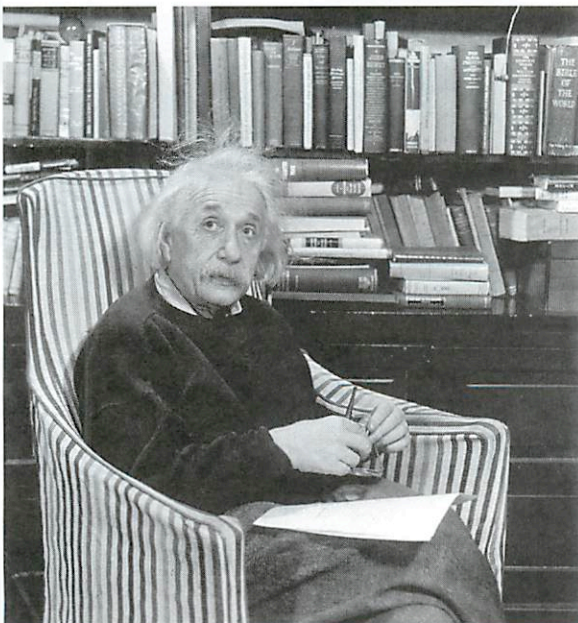


## 1. A New Century

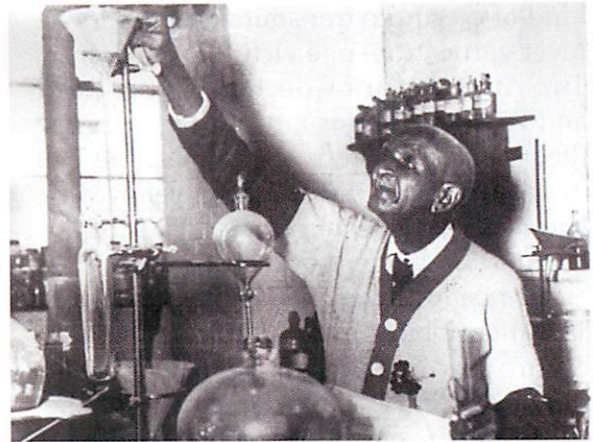
### Science and Technology Advance

The dawning of a new century in 1900 seemed to offer a future bright with promise. Great changes were taking place all over Europe and America through the advance of science and technology. Men had become so confident in their own abilities and achievements that they believed their every problem could be solved by science, government action, or social reform.

**Great strides in science.** The 20th century brought tremendous advances in every major area of science. In 1900, for example, German scientist **Max Planck** expanded the field of physics with the *quantum theory* of matter and energy. New Zealander **Ernest Rutherford**, called “*the Father of Nuclear Science*,” also advanced the science of physics in 1911 with his nuclear theory of the atom. Rutherford became the first person to split an atom, leading to the future development of atomic fission. Danish physicist **Niels Bohr** revised Rutherford’s work and produced the *planetary model* of the atom, which showed the subatomic particles revolving around a nucleus made up of



Albert Einstein



George Washington Carver

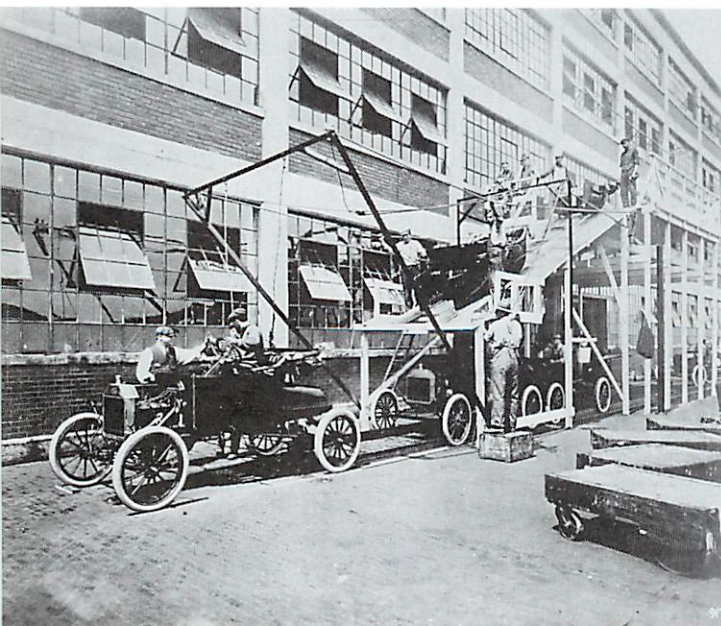
protons and neutrons. **Albert Einstein** (1879–1955), a German of Jewish descent, revolutionized the scientific world with his *theories of relativity*, which uncovered new principles of order and reality, dramatically increasing our understanding of the universe. The pioneering work of these and other scientists would launch the world into the atomic age during the 1940s.

Scientific advancements were also made in agriculture. The best-remembered agricultural scientist is American **George Washington Carver** (1859?–1943). After the turn of the century, Carver thoroughly revolutionized agriculture in the southern United States. His many achievements include his discoveries of hundreds of profitable uses for the peanut, the soybean, and the sweet potato. His experiments and his years of dedicated teaching at Tuskegee Institute in Alabama greatly enhanced America’s agricultural productivity.

In the field of medicine, scientists built on the work of Louis Pasteur and took the first steps to eradicate some of mankind’s most dreaded diseases. Following the turn of the 20th century, inoculations had been developed for such deadly childhood diseases as typhoid fever and diphtheria. Another dangerous disease, yellow fever, was conquered through the work of **Dr. Carlos Finlay** [fēn·li’: 1833–1915], a Cuban physician. Finlay theorized that a particular

kind of mosquito transmitted the yellow fever germs from one victim to another. Two American army doctors, **Walter Reed** and **William Gorgas**, proved Finlay's theory and took steps to eliminate the disease; by 1914, the dreaded "yellow jack" had been all but exterminated in Cuba, Panama, and other tropical regions.

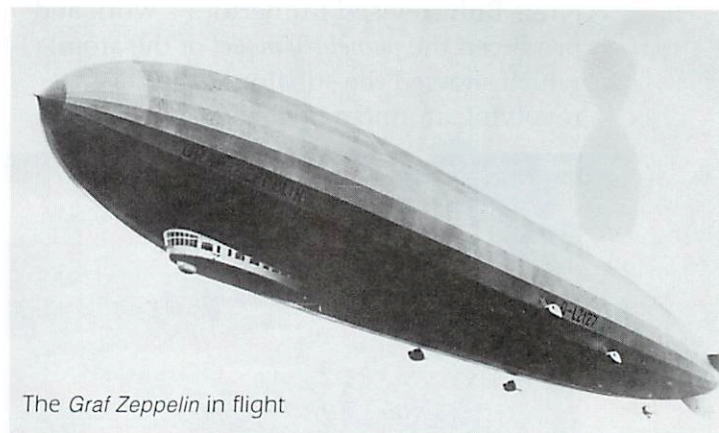
**Transportation and communication.** The automobile, invented during the 19th century, became a major element of life in the 20th century. Considered at first to be merely an expensive toy for the wealthy, automobiles soon became practical for the common man after American entrepreneur **Henry Ford** organized the Ford Motor Company in 1903. By engineering an inexpensive model, the *Model T*, and by developing the *assembly-line* process to increase speed and cut cost of production, Ford was able to produce a low-cost, dependable automobile for the average American. This new proliferation of automobiles also stimulated other commercial activity, including road building and the rubber, steel, and oil industries, creating thousands of new jobs.



Ford Motor Company assembly line in 1913

Land travel was not the only interest of early 20th-century inventors. For centuries, men had dreamed of *flying* through the skies. Man's dream of flight became a reality at the beginning of the 20th century. One of the early pioneers in aviation was **Count Ferdinand von Zeppelin** of Germany. In 1900, Zeppelin designed and built a rigid, lighter-than-air "airship" called a *dirigible*, or "zeppelin" after its inventor. In 1910, the German Airship Transportation Company became the world's first airline when it began carrying passengers and mail between several German cities.

The greatest step in the progress of aviation came on December 17, 1903, when Americans **Orville** and **Wilbur Wright** made *the first successful airplane flight* at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. Few people took the airplane seriously in 1903, but through additional experiments and later flights, its significance soon became apparent; by 1914, air shows and races were being



The Graf Zeppelin in flight



The Wright Brothers at Kitty Hawk

held all over Europe and America to promote aviation and the airplane.

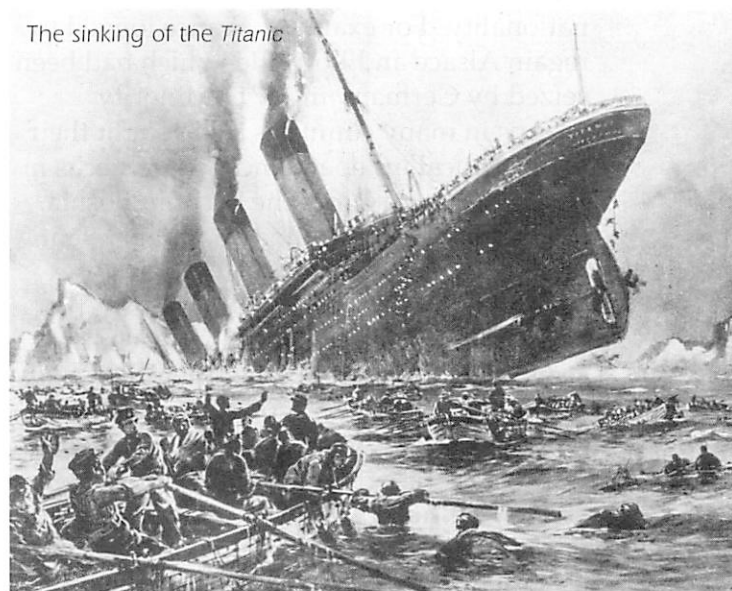
The early 1900s also saw important advances in communications. People started putting Marconi's principles of wireless telegraphy to all sorts of good uses. The wireless telegraph was especially invaluable when ships in distress at sea needed to call for aid. The next step after the wireless telegraph was the wireless telephone. The number of telephones in operation had increased rapidly, and new kinds of equipment made the telephone more versatile. In 1915, a wireless telephone successfully transmitted speech across the Atlantic.

A direct result of the wireless telephone was the *radio*. Throughout the early 20th century, many people worked at developing instruments that could broadcast and receive voice and sound transmissions over radio waves. Several experimental radio broadcasts had been made by 1910, and in 1920, **KDKA**, the first commercial broadcasting station, went on the air in Pittsburgh. KDKA was soon joined by a host of other stations. By the end of the 1920s, millions of people could listen to news and entertainment broadcasts over the radio.

One of the biggest and most tragic stories of the early 20th century also sadly illustrated how man had come to place tremendous faith in his technological achievements. On the night of April 14, 1912, the British luxury liner *Titanic* sank in the icy Atlantic Ocean, carrying 1,522 men, women, and children to watery graves. The *Titanic*, nicknamed the "Millionaires' Special," was one of the largest (over 110 feet tall and nearly 900 feet long) and most opulent ships that had ever been built. In spite of her size, the *Titanic's* design made her faster than most ships of her day. Because of her construction, the great *Titanic* was also supposed to be unsinkable. The enormous vessel was designed to stay afloat even with several holds flooded to the ceiling. One crew member boasted that "God Himself could

not sink this ship." But on her maiden (first) voyage, the *Titanic* suddenly came upon a towering iceberg which scraped her side beneath the waterline, gouging a 300-foot hole in the ship. At first, no one worried, for everyone believed the *Titanic* was unsinkable. Her automatic floodgates had closed, and theoretically the ship would stay afloat. But it quickly became evident that the *Titanic* was indeed sinking. Passengers began to flee in lifeboats, but the *Titanic* did not carry enough lifeboats for everyone, and many passengers could not or would not leave the ship. Those passengers who had escaped in lifeboats watched the *Titanic* sink lower and lower into the water. Finally, the huge stern pointed straight up, the great vessel broke in half, and in just two and a half hours, the "unsinkable" *Titanic* slipped beneath the waves. Of the over 2,200 passengers and crew, little over 700 survived.

News of the *Titanic's* sinking stunned the world. Major steps were taken to prevent the same dreadful accident from happening again. For example, ships were required to carry enough lifeboats for everyone on board and to maintain 24-hour "wireless" radio operators. As a further



precaution, the International Ice Patrol was formed to constantly check the North Atlantic for dangerous icebergs. But the shock that came with the sinking of the *Titanic* would be surpassed by events that had been developing for years—events that would further shake man's confidence in his own abilities and achievements.

## The Road to War

Civilization had progressed so far by the beginning of the 20th century that it seemed the world could only get better and better. Little did people realize that on the horizon loomed two of the greatest wars the world had ever known.

### *Spiritual decay erases hopes for peace.*

Several attempts were made during the late-19th and early-20th centuries to maintain world peace, including the establishment of the Nobel Peace Prize and the meeting of two international peace conferences at the Hague in the Netherlands; but the tensions caused by two centuries of anti-Biblical philosophies had set Europe on a seemingly uncontrollable course toward war. Strong feelings of revolutionary nationalism, the result of spiritual decay, caused some European powers to seek the annexation of areas inhabited by people of their own nationality. For example, France longed to regain Alsace and Lorraine, which had been seized by Germany in 1871. Minority groups in many countries also sought their own political independence. The Czechs in Austria-Hungary, and the Serbs in Bosnia, for example, each wanted an independent nation.

Beginning in the late-19th century, the nations of Europe competed in a deadly arms race, hoping to further their own ambitions by force. Among the most aggressive nations was the newly united Germany. Under the leadership of **Kaiser** [kī'zēr] **Wilhelm II**, Germany was eager to flex its muscles, expand, and demonstrate its strength to the older, established nations



Kaiser  
Wilhelm II

of Europe. Many German people had by this time rejected all but an empty form of their Christian heritage and had accepted modernism almost without question. The vacuum created by this rejection of true Christianity was destined to bring terror and destruction to Germany.

**Opposing alliances.** Another source of potential conflict among the European powers was entangling alliances brought about by decades of fear and distrust over the "balance of power" on the continent. By 1914, the major European powers were divided into two hostile camps. On one side was the **Triple Alliance**, including *Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy*. On the other side was the **Triple Entente** [än'tänt'], consisting of *France, Great Britain, and Russia*. Smaller nations allied themselves with whichever power bloc they feared less.

**Rivalry in the Balkans.** The crucible of European rivalry was the Balkan Peninsula, which included the nations of Serbia, Montenegro, Albania, Bulgaria, Romania, Greece, and the European part of Turkey. The major European powers all had conflicting interests in the Balkans. Russia desired to control all of the Slavic nations, bringing it into conflict with Germany and Austria's expanding influence in eastern Europe. France wanted to preserve its economic interests. England sought to keep its rivals away from the eastern Mediterranean, the British link to India. Turkey hoped to protect her tenuous position in

Europe. The Balkan nations themselves, desiring to maintain their independence, opposed Turkey, Austria, and each other.

### The Great War Begins

The European powder keg exploded on June 28, 1914, when **Archduke Francis Ferdinand**, heir to the Austrian throne, and his wife were assassinated by a Serbian revolutionary in the town of **Sarajevo** [sä'rá·yě·vō], Bosnia (then an Austrian province in the Balkans). Convinced that anti-Austrian propaganda coming out of Serbia had led to the assassination, Austria decided to take aggressive action. After a month of intense negotiations and ultimatums, Austria declared war on Serbia on **July 28, 1914**. **World War I**, known in its day as the *Great War*, had begun.

All the major powers of Europe and their worldwide colonies were soon embroiled in war. Two days after Austria's declaration of war, Russia began to mobilize (prepare for war) its military to help Slavic Serbia and prepare for possible conflict with Austria's ally, Germany. Germany, assuming war with Russia inevitable and wanting to get the upper hand, declared war on Russia. Since France planned to come to the aid of her Russian allies, Germany also declared war on France. The next day, Germany, putting into effect a long-planned scheme to conquer France, sent troops through neutral Belgium to attack Paris. England, concerned that German forces were operating near the English Channel, insisted that Belgium's neutral rights be respected, but the German chancellor said the 1839 treaty guaranteeing Belgium's neutrality was merely "a scrap of paper." So England came to the aid of Belgium and declared war on Germany.

As the nations of Europe took sides in the conflict, the Triple Entente (England, France, and Russia) and its supporters (which included Serbia, Belgium, Montenegro, Greece, Romania, Portugal,

and Japan) became known as the **Allies**. The Triple Alliance (Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy) and its allies (which included Bulgaria and Turkey) became known as the **Central Powers**. Because Germany and Austria were not fighting a *defensive* war, Italy refused to fulfill her treaty obligations to aid them. Instead, Italy remained neutral and later *joined the Allies*, quite confident she had joined the winning side. With nations from both Europe and from around the globe engaged in fighting, the Great War had indeed become a world war.

### Section Review 1

1. Who developed the quantum theory? Who is remembered as the "Father of Nuclear Science"? Who developed the theories of relativity?
2. What Cuban doctor helped conquer yellow fever? Name two American army doctors who also fought yellow fever.
3. Who helped make automobiles practical for the common man? What inexpensive automobile did he engineer?
4. Who designed the dirigible? Who made the first successful airplane flight?
5. What invention was a direct result of the wireless telephone?
6. Briefly explain how spiritual decay in Europe led to World War I.
7. Name the countries comprising the Triple Alliance. Name the countries comprising the Triple Entente. In what region of Europe did all the major European powers have conflicting interests?
8. Whose assassination led to the outbreak of World War I? On what date did World War I begin? Briefly explain how the nations of Europe became involved in the war.

**Identify:** Niels Bohr, George Washington Carver, KDKA, *Titanic*, Kaiser Wilhelm II, Sarajevo, Great War, Allies, Central Powers

## 2. The Course of the War

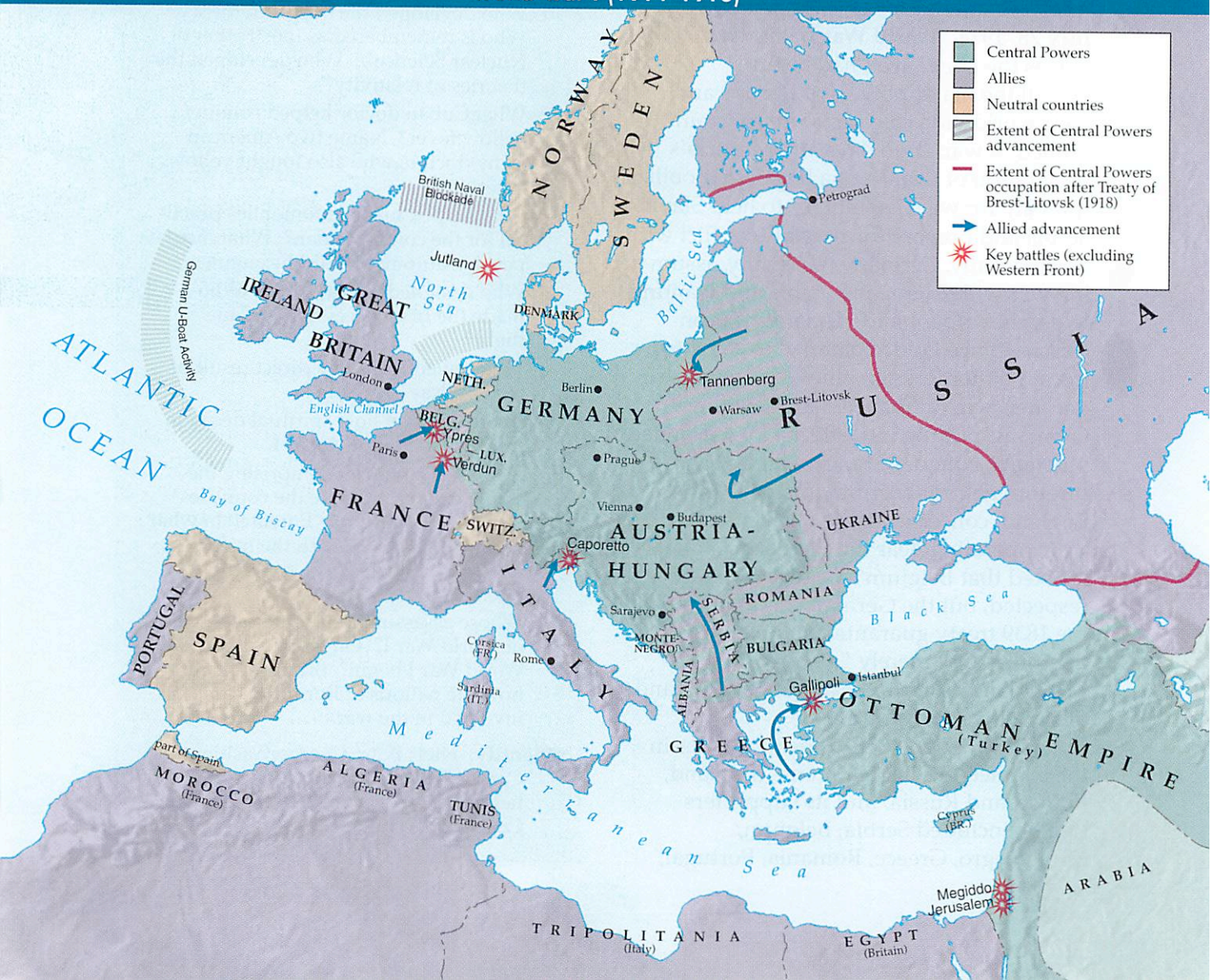
### The Western Front, 1914–1916

*The "Miracle on the Marne."* The Germans planned to overwhelm France within six weeks, and it appeared they would succeed. Through August 1914, they steadily drove back the armies of France, Belgium, and Britain until they had overrun Belgium and much of northern France. By September, the Germans were only 15 miles from Paris. Then, in what is remembered as the *"Miracle on the Marne,"* French forces stopped the German advance in a stunning counteroffensive that drove the exhausted

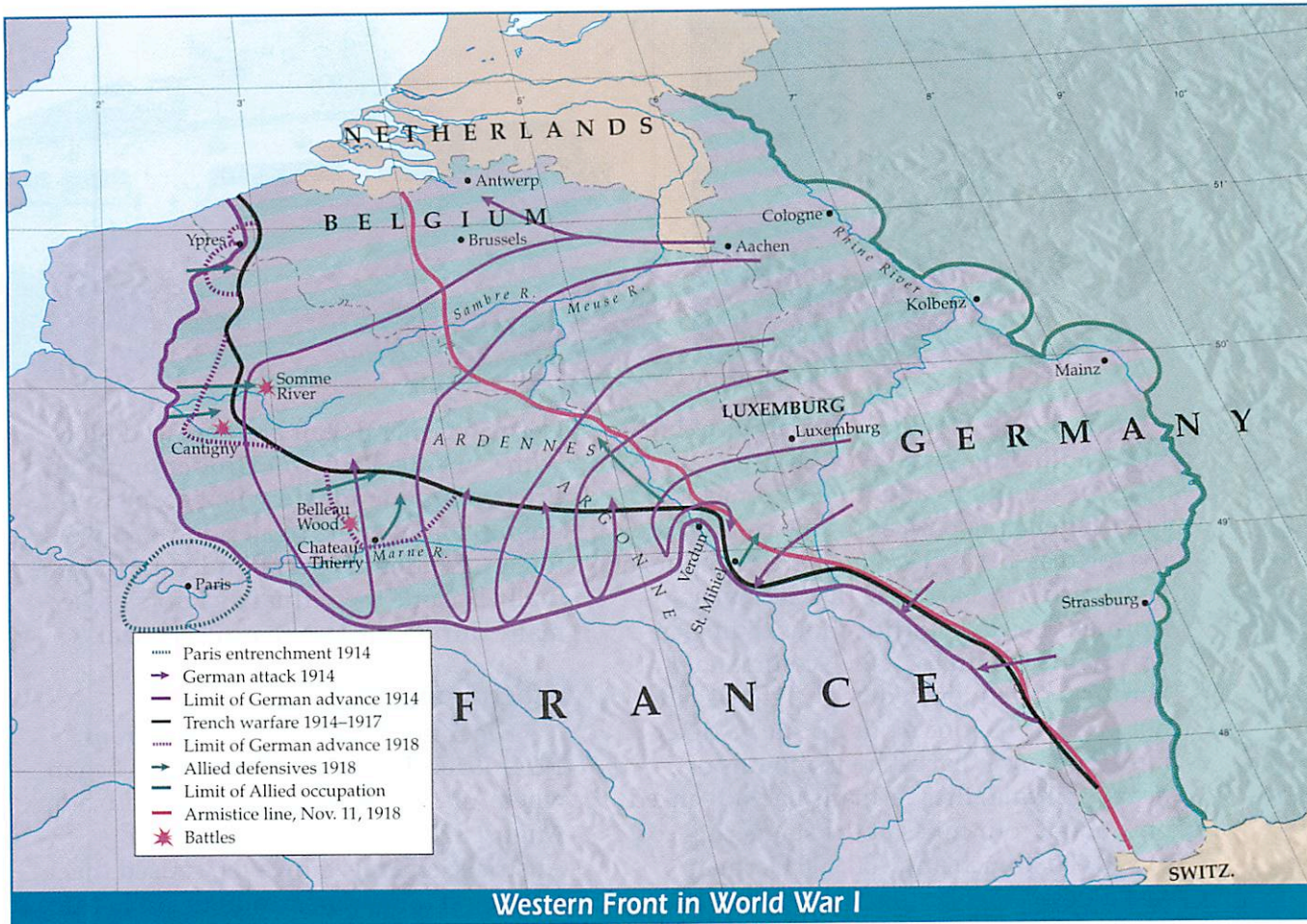
Germans back across the Marne River, saving Paris and the French army from capture.

*The "Race to the Sea."* During October and November, the Allies and Germans raced each other to the English Channel and the North Sea, each attempting to outflank the other. At *Ypres* [ē'pr'], Belgium, the small but gallant British Expeditionary Force lost 50,000 men in its courageous defense against the German onslaught. The Germans were finally stopped, and both sides settled down to digging intricate systems of *trenches* (deep ditches used in battle for cover against enemy gunfire).

### World War I (1914–1918)





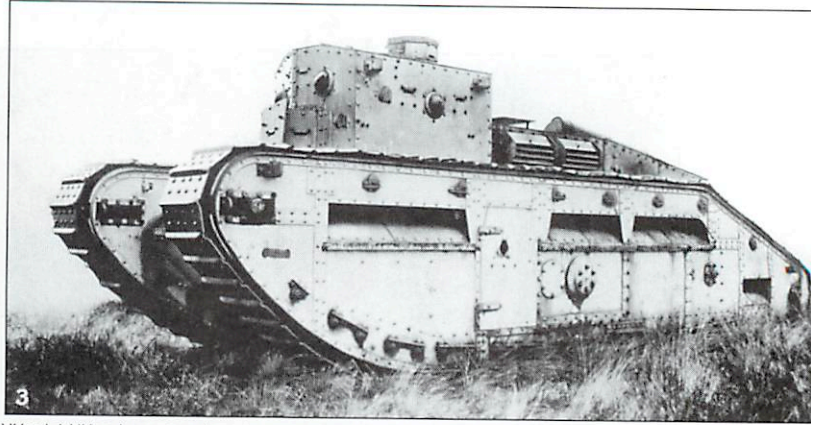


British soldiers ("tommies") charging out of the trenches, c. 1916

By Christmas 1914, the **Western Front** stretched for 600 miles from the English Channel to the Swiss Alps. The number of casualties mounted as trenches, machine guns, heavy artillery, and barbed wire came to dominate the battlefield, making frontal assaults difficult and costly. The horrible conditions worsened as soldiers on both sides huddled in damp, dirty, vermin-infested trenches, waiting for orders to go "over the top" and charge across "no man's land" (the barren and dangerous territory between opposing trenches) into the enemy's positions. New "secret" weapons—the Germans introduced poisonous gas and the flamethrower and the Allies developed the tank—made local gains possible but failed to achieve a complete breakthrough.



General Paul von Hindenburg



World War I-era tank

**The Battle of Verdun.** Attempts to break the deadlock only met with disaster. In 1916, the Germans attempted to crack the French defenses with a furious assault upon the fortress-city of *Verdun*. After 24 hours of heavy artillery barrages, the Germans stormed the city's fortifications. But General **Henri Pétain** [pā'tān'], commander of Verdun's defenders, vowed: "They shall not pass!" His forces put up such a determined defense that after six months of heavy fighting, the Germans had advanced only about four miles at the staggering cost of 540,000 French and 430,000 German casualties.

**The Somme Offensive.** In an attempt to relieve the pressure at Verdun, British forces launched a massive offensive against the Germans at the *Somme* [sôm] *River*. For a solid week, British guns pounded the German lines day and night, forcing the Germans to take shelter in their deeply dug trenches and forts. When the barrage lifted, long rows of British "tommies" (a nickname for British soldiers) charged the German lines with gleaming bayonets. Instead of being crushed, however, the Germans emerged from their fortifications and raked the British ranks with intense machine-gun fire. By the end of the Somme offensive, the British had suffered over 600,000 casualties to gain just seven miles of land! The German army likewise suffered the loss of more than 500,000 officers and men. In disgust, Kaiser Wilhelm II dismissed the chief of the

German General Staff and replaced him with Generals **Paul von Hindenburg** and **Erich von Ludendorff**, who became supreme commanders of all Central Powers forces. Hindenburg and Ludendorff eventually became the virtual dictators of Germany during the last years of the war.

### Other Fronts

**The Balkans and the Eastern Front, 1914–1918.** The war in the Balkans began when Austria-Hungary invaded Serbia in August 1914. The incompetence of Austria's generals, however, caused the Austrian-Hungarian armies to fail in three successive attempts to crush tiny Serbia. The Central Powers finally conquered Serbia in the late autumn of 1915, but only after Austria-Hungary received reinforcements from Germany and Bulgaria.

On the Eastern Front, the greatest threat to the Central Powers was Russia. Although the Russian army lacked armaments and discipline, it was large enough to inflict heavy casualties on its enemies. Russia was not prepared for a prolonged struggle, however. Hordes of poorly equipped Russian troops invaded German and Austrian territory in August 1914, inflicting 350,000 casualties upon the Austrian-Hungarians. But later that month, the outnumbered German forces under General von Hindenburg severely defeated two Russian armies at the Battle of Tannenberg. During the next year, powerful German and

Austrian offensives regained the lost territory and drove the Russians from most of Poland and Lithuania. In 1916, the Russians attempted a new offensive and captured more than 400,000 Austrian-Hungarian troops, but German reinforcements arrived in time to halt the Russian advance and conquer Romania, Russia's only ally on the Eastern Front.

By 1917, the exhausted Russians, having suffered over a million casualties, reached the threshold of political turmoil and economic collapse. Growing discontent over the war led to the **Russian Revolution** in March 1917 (February on the old Russian calendar), when mutinous soldiers forced the czar to abdicate, and a Provisional Government was established. In November 1917 (October on the old Russian calendar), Communist revolutionaries, led by **Nikolai Lenin**, overthrew the Provisional Government in the *Bolshevik Revolution* and established a Communist dictatorship in Russia. Because he wanted to concentrate on consolidating his Communist state, Lenin took Russia out of the war by signing the **Treaty of Brest-Litovsk** [brĕst'li·tôfsk'] with the Central Powers and surrendering much land and resources to Germany.

*The Italian front, 1915–1918.* Italy joined the Allies in 1915 in hope of winning territory in Europe and Africa at the expense of the Central Powers. However, the Italians' initial campaigns ended in a series of costly and inconclusive battles against the Austrians along their common border in the Alps. Disaster struck the Italians in October 1917 when the Germans reinforced the Austrians and launched a devastating offensive that captured much Italian territory. But by the end of the war, Italy managed to take back her lost lands and defeat the already-collapsing Austrian-Hungarian forces. For all of their exertions and sacrifices, the Italians gained little from the war except many casualties and a massive war debt.

*The war in Africa and Asia.* Germany's overseas colonies were quickly subdued by the Allies. In Asia and the Pacific, the German colonies fell to the Japanese. In Africa, the British, French, and Belgians captured Germany's west African colonies, but the German troops in east Africa held out against the Allies for the duration of the war.

In the Middle East, Turkey threatened the Suez Canal, England's vital link to India and the rest of Asia, but the British turned the Turks back and invaded the Turkish provinces of Syria, Mesopotamia, and Palestine. The colorful British colonel **T. E. Lawrence** (*"Lawrence of Arabia"*) led Arab revolts against Turkish rule in the Arabian Peninsula, and British and Australian troops under General **Edmund Allenby** captured Jerusalem in December 1917. (The British would remain in the Holy Land until Israel achieved independence in 1948.)

*The Gallipoli Campaign.* By far the largest British offensive in the East was the **Gallipoli** [ga·lĭp'ô·lĕ] **Campaign**, which was planned by England's First Lord of the Admiralty, **Winston Churchill** (1874–1965). Realizing that it was useless to hurl men and equipment against the well-entrenched German fortifications in France, Churchill proposed instead to strike at the Central Powers through the "back door" of the much weaker Ottoman Empire (Turkey). The plan called for the landing of British troops at Gallipoli, near the entrance of the Dardanelles, and the swift capture of Istanbul (Constantinople), the Turkish capital. But when the campaign began in February 1915, the Allied commanders bungled the operation very badly by failing to maintain secrecy and then allowing the Turks and Germans to build up their own forces in the area. Although the British, French, and ANZAC (Australian and New Zealand Army Corps) soldiers who landed at Gallipoli fought bravely against incredible odds, the Allies were compelled to

World War I: "The War to End All Wars"

withdraw after suffering over 250,000 casualties. As a result of the tragedy at Gallipoli, Churchill was forced to resign his post.

The War at Sea and in the Air

The war at sea. Following the outbreak of war, the powerful British navy immediately blockaded Germany's access to the seas. To get around the British blockade, Germany resorted to a new weapon of war—the submarine or U-boat (German: unterseeboot). With its deadly torpedoes and its ability to launch surprise attacks from underwater, the submarine proved to be a very effective weapon.

In early 1915, Germany declared all waters surrounding the British Isles to be a war zone and threatened to sink without warning any ship that passed through these waters. One of the first victims of submarine warfare was the British luxury liner Lusitania. Before the Lusitania sailed from New York, the German embassy in the U.S. warned people not to board the ship, claiming that it carried war supplies for the British. But the Lusitania embarked with passengers and crew despite the warning. On May 7, 1915, the Lusitania sank off the coast of Ireland after being hit by a torpedo from a German U-boat. Some 1,198 passengers, including 128 Americans, were killed. This tragic event greatly aroused American opinion against Germany; the U.S. government sent Germany an ultimatum demanding the termination of unrestricted submarine warfare. To prevent America's entry into the war, Germany replied that in the future, liners and merchant ships would not be sunk without warning and that provision would be made for the safety of those on board. But in January 1917, Germany announced the resumption of unrestricted submarine warfare, hoping to win the war by cutting off British supply lines and defeating the Allies before the U.S. decided to join the Allies.



News of the sinking of the Lusitania, May 8, 1915

The most important naval battle of the war took place when Germany's High Seas Fleet desperately tried to break the British blockade. In May 1916, the German fleet clashed with the British Royal Navy at the Battle of Jutland, in the North Sea west of Denmark. Although the British losses were heavier, the German fleet was forced to return to its home port and remain there for the remainder of the war.

War in the air. Air warfare made its debut during World War I. At first, airplanes were used primarily for scouting enemy positions. In the earliest air combat encounters, pilots fired pistols or rifles at one another. Later in the war, planes were used for dropping bombs and were equipped with machine guns synchronized with the propeller rotations so that a pilot would not shoot off his own propeller. Soon, whole squadrons of fighter planes engaged in colorful but deadly "dogfights" in the skies over France and Belgium. Pilots who shot down at least five enemy aircraft were called "aces." Among the most fa-



Eddie Rickenbacker



Manfred von Richthofen, "The Red Baron"

amous aces of World War I were German **Manfred von Richthofen** [rĪKHt' hō' fən: also known as the "*Red Baron*"], who shot down 80 Allied planes, and American **Eddie Rickenbacker**, who destroyed 26 enemy aircraft. The Germans also used giant zeppelins (dirigibles) to bomb targets in England. Thus, World War I demonstrated the vital role air power would play in future conflicts.

### The Western Front, 1917–1918

*A bleak outlook.* By 1917, the situation in Europe looked grim. The Central Powers occupied much of the Balkans, Poland, Belgium, and northern France. With Russia's withdrawal from the war later in the year, Germany would be able to transfer large numbers of troops to the Western Front for a final showdown with the Allies. It appeared that unless help arrived soon, the Allies were doomed.

*From neutrality to intervention.* The United States had hoped to avoid involvement in the conflict by declaring its neutrality at the beginning of the war. But as the war progressed, America was increasingly drawn to the Allied cause. First, there were economic reasons. As a neutral nation, America traded with both the Allies and the Central Powers. However, the bulk of her trade was with the Allies; between 1914 and 1916, American exports to the Allies quadrupled. Much of what the Allies purchased

from America was bought on credit. American businesses and financial institutions also floated loans to the Allies and allowed them to purchase goods on credit. If the Allies were to pay the debt, they must win the war.

The United States had other reasons for supporting the Allies. The American people held a deep respect for their English heritage and retained a historical gratitude to France for her participation in America's War for Independence. Furthermore, the tyranny of the German government over its own people and over other Europeans was incompatible with American ideals of liberty. Americans were shocked by stories of German atrocities in Belgium and outraged by Germany's unrestricted submarine warfare.

Meanwhile, another incident brought the United States closer to war. In early 1917, British agents intercepted a secret message from German Foreign Minister Arthur Zimmermann to the German delegate in Mexico. The *Zimmermann Note* proposed that Mexico and Germany form an alliance if the United States entered the war. In return for helping defeat the United States, Germany offered Mexico her "lost territory in New Mexico, Texas, and Arizona." Mexico was also supposed to encourage Japan to switch sides and join the Central Powers. The British released this message to the United States, and in March the Zimmermann Note appeared in Ameri-



U.S. General John J. Pershing (second from right) arriving in France



U.S. President Woodrow Wilson

can newspapers. This announcement was shortly followed by news of renewed submarine attacks on American merchant ships.

Millions of infuriated Americans now demanded retaliation. U.S. President **Woodrow Wilson** (1856–1924) declared that "The world must be made safe for democracy." Convinced that America must intervene in Europe, he brought the matter before Congress, and on April 6, 1917, Congress declared war on Germany.

On the day war was declared, the U.S. Navy mobilized its fleets. Soon, fast destroyers were protecting great convoys of merchant ships carrying men and supplies across the North Atlantic. The American fleet also helped lay a mine field in the North Sea to curtail the activity of German submarines.

*The last German offensive.* The United States, however, still needed time to raise an army large enough to help the Allies defeat the Central Powers. Hoping to win the war before the Allies could be reinforced by fresh American troops, Germany decided to make an all-out attack on the Western Front. Under the leadership of Generals von Hindenburg and von Ludendorff, the German army engaged the British and French forces in relentless battle beginning in March 1918, and for the next several weeks, steadily drove the Allies back. The Germans used

one of their famous long-range guns, "*Big Bertha*," to bombard Paris from 75 miles away. Finally, after conquering 3,000 square miles of territory and taking 150,000 prisoners, the Germans came within 40 miles of Paris and launched their final attack at the Second Battle of the Marne. Allied newspapers prepared their readers for the imminent fall of Paris.

*Turning the tide.* But the German offensive was too late. Under the command of General **John J. ("Blackjack") Pershing**, the American Expeditionary Force arrived in France at the rate of 300,000 men a month; large numbers of American "*doughboys*" (a nickname for the American soldiers) reached the front in time, halting the German advance. American troops especially distinguished themselves at the battles of Cantigny [kän·ē·nyē'], Belleau Wood [bē·lō'], Chateau-Thierry [shā·tō'tyē·rē'], and St. Mihiel [sän' mē·yēl'], and during the terrible Meuse-Argonne [mûz'är'gôn'] campaign. With American resources, the Allied armies under the supreme command of French Field Marshal **Ferdinand Foch** [fôsh] began driving the Germans back.

*The Central Powers collapse.* Suddenly everything fell apart for the Central Powers. Bulgaria surrendered at the end of September, and Turkey gave up a month later. Austria-Hungary surrendered on November 3. Meanwhile, revolution had broken out in Germany; Kaiser Wilhelm II abdicated and fled to the Netherlands, a neutral country. In his place, a representative government called the **Weimar Republic** was established. With their armies in disarray and their new gov-



Soldiers and civilians celebrating the armistice in France

ernment trying to stabilize itself, the Germans had little choice but to appeal to the Allies for an armistice (truce) and accept the terms presented by Marshal Foch. On **November 11, 1918**, in Compiègne, France, Allied and German delegates met in a railroad car and signed the armistice to go into effect at 11:00 that morning—the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month. Whistles and sirens sounded and church bells pealed in joy throughout Europe and America in celebration of *Armistice Day* (now called *Veterans Day* in the U.S.). Even in defeated nations, many citizens rejoiced to see the end of the bloodshed. The Great War was over.

### Concepts in History

## The Providence of God in History

by Herbert Butterfield, famous British historian

If you go on a journey, and at the end of it I ask: Why are you here now? you may answer: "Because I wanted to come"; or you may say: "Because a railway-train carried me here"; or you may say: "Because it is the will of God"; and all these things may be true at the same time—true on different levels. So with history: we may say at the first level of analysis that men's actions make history—and men have free will—they are responsible for the kind of history that they make. But, then, secondly, at a different level, we find that history, like nature itself, represents a realm of law—its events are in a certain sense reducible to laws. However unpredictable history may be before it has happened it is capable of rational explanation once it has happened; so much so that it becomes difficult sometimes to imagine that it ever had been possible for anything else to have happened or for history to have taken any other course.

Now these two things are difficult enough to reconcile in themselves—first of all the **free will** of human beings and secondly the **reign of law** in history. But they are reconcilable—and historians can discover large processes taking place in society for a hundred years to produce a French Revolution and an Industrial Revolution; and yet at the same time the historian will treat the French revolutionaries themselves or the nineteenth-century capitalists as subjects of free will, capable of making one decision rather than another, and even blamable for certain decisions that they actually made. We can even work out the laws and conditioning circumstances which have made the twentieth century an epoch of colossal world-war; and those laws are so clear that some people were predicting their ultimate results nearly a hundred years ago. Some

people in the nineteenth century, analysing the processes that were taking place in their time, predicted that the twentieth century would be a period of stupendous warfare and of still more prolonged war-strain. Yet, looking at the story from a different angle, we do not say that nobody is to blame for the outbreak of war in Europe in July 1914. The men who made disastrous decisions in July 1914 are still responsible and blamable for the decisions that they made.

But besides the freedom of the human will and besides the reign of law in history, there is a further factor that is operative in life and in the story of the centuries—one which in a sense includes these two other things—namely the **Providence of God**, in whom we live and move and have our being. And in part the Providence of God works through these two other things—it is Providence which puts us in a world

### 3. The Peace That Failed

#### The Aftermath of War

World War I brought the greatest destruction in property and people the world had ever seen. More than *13 million people died* from battle or disease, and as many as 21 million were wounded. Financing the war drained the treasuries of many European countries. In the aftermath of the war, America began to ship food and medical supplies across the Atlantic. American relief shipments kept millions of Europeans, including Germans, from starving after the devastation of war.

#### Men Killed in Battle

##### World War I

1,700,000	Russia
1,600,000	Germany
1,385,000	France
900,000	British Empire
800,000	Austria-Hungary
462,000	Italy
53,000	United States

The most profound effect of World War I was its impact on the spirit of mankind. Before the Great War, people believed in the inevitability of human progress and the triumph of Western civilization. The war shattered this idea, and instead clearly illustrated how false the concept of “continual human perfection” was. The only explanation for the horrors of World War I was the Biblical doctrine of man’s sinful, depraved nature, and the only solution was in Biblical Christianity.

#### President Wilson’s Plan for Peace

Even by the end of the war, however, many people still clung to the hope that diplomats and politicians could achieve a lasting peace. U.S. President Woodrow Wilson was especially convinced that peace could be attained through human efforts. He declared the war was

... a war for freedom and justice and self-government amongst all the nations of the world, a war to make the world safe for the peoples who live upon it and have made it their own, the German people themselves included.

He expressed the hope that World War I would be “*the war to end all wars.*”

In a speech to Congress in January 1918, President Wilson listed *Fourteen Points* as the “only possible program for world peace.” The first five points proposed a new program of international relations: open peace treaties, freedom of the seas, free international trade, arms reductions, and national self-determination. Points 6 through 13 dealt with the political and territorial future of Russia, Eastern Europe, and occupied countries in the West. The fourteenth point, which President Wilson believed to be the most important of all, called for “a general association of nations” for the promotion of world peace.

#### The Versailles Peace Conference

Once the armistice had stopped the fighting, the powers of the world called for a peace conference to convene in Paris. The signing of a peace treaty seemed urgent. The European landscape lay in ruins, the economies of Western Europe were in shambles, and many parts of the continent were in political upheaval. Communism now controlled Russia and threatened to spread revolution to other parts of the world.

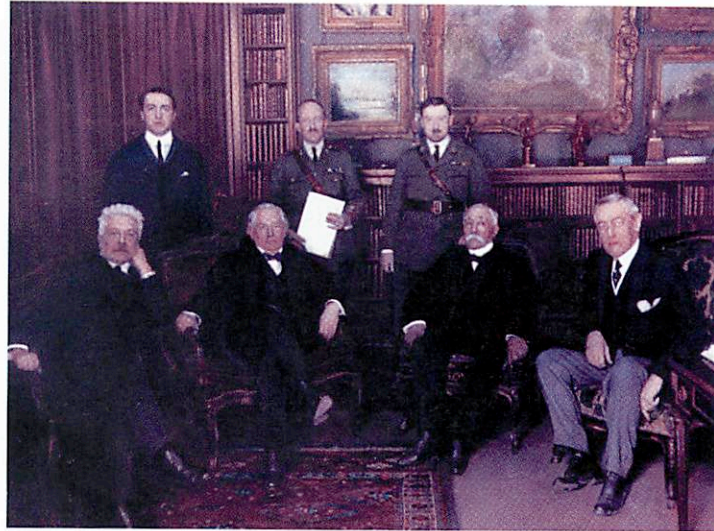
The peace conference convened in January 1919 at the Palace of Versailles outside Paris. The conference made little progress, however, for although it was supposed to achieve a “peace between equals,” no representatives from the defeated Central Powers were invited to attend. After two slow months, the leadership of the conference fell to four influential men. The “**Big Four**” were President Wilson, Prime Minister David Lloyd George of England, Premier Georges Clemenceau [klēm’en·sō’] of France, and Prime Minister Vittorio Orlando of Italy.



**The League of Nations.** Convinced that the most critical step in maintaining future world peace was the establishment of a "**League of Nations,**" President Wilson insisted that his proposed league be made a part of the treaty itself. He was even willing to compromise on other points to get his league accepted, believing that mistakes made at the peace conference could be corrected later through the League of Nations. At Wilson's insistence, the delegates at Versailles appointed a special commission to draw up a covenant, or charter, for an international body. By mid-February 1919, the Versailles Peace Conference had approved the covenant of the League of Nations, which was later established in Geneva, Switzerland. On paper, the League of Nations looked like the final solution to world peace with its promise "to guarantee international cooperation and to achieve international peace and security." In practice, however, it would become just one more of man's futile attempts to impose peace on people whose hearts are at war with each other.

**The Treaty of Versailles.** The chief result of the peace conference was the **Treaty of Versailles.** In its final form, the treaty was a series of compromises, with some of Wilson's Fourteen Points, including the covenant of the League of Nations, influencing the terms of the treaty. Unfortunately, Wilson's ideal of a "peace among equals" was not included. Other important provisions of the treaty may be summarized as follows:

- (1) **German territorial losses.** Germany was forced to give up all colonies and overseas possessions. Alsace and Lorraine were ceded to France. France was given the right to exploit for 15 years the rich industrial Saar basin on the French-German border. Germany lost territory on her borders with Poland and Denmark.
- (2) **Demilitarization of Germany.** Germany was stripped of her military might. The



The "Big Four" (right to left)—Wilson, Clemenceau, Lloyd George, and Orlando—at the Versailles Conference

German army was reduced to 100,000 men (about the size of Belgium's army) and conscription (military draft) was prohibited. Germany's navy and merchant marine were also to be severely limited in size. German territory west of the Rhine was to be occupied by Allied troops for up to 15 years, and a zone extending 50 kilometers east of the Rhine was to be demilitarized.

- (3) **Reparation and admission of guilt.** The "war guilt" clause of the treaty forced Germany to admit sole responsibility for causing the war. On that basis, Germany was to pay the entire cost of war damages, determined by a special committee in 1921 to be about \$33 billion.

When the German officials received the final terms of the Treaty of Versailles, they protested that it did not reflect the spirit of Wilson's Fourteen Points, which Germany had accepted in signing the armistice. Germany was especially humiliated at having to accept total responsibility for the war. However, facing the threat of Allied invasion, Germany had little choice but to accept the treaty. On June 28, 1919, precisely five years following the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand in Sarajevo, the treaty was signed.

The Treaty of Versailles left the German people very bitter. It saddled them with guilt and with a debt they could not pay. It also placed Germany in a position to be victimized by extremists and fanatics, and gave her a new “democratic” government with no sure foundation. The spiritual decay that was so prevalent in Germany before the war grew even worse, and the resentment and economic hardship that resulted in Germany because of the Treaty of Versailles helped sow the seeds for future strife.

Ironically for President Wilson, the United States was the only victor *not* to endorse the Treaty of Versailles or join the League of Nations. By the time the treaty was completed, many Americans had come to oppose it. Some insisted it was too harsh on

Germany, and others feared the entangling alliances it would create. Many realized the treaty would jeopardize American sovereignty in international affairs, while other Americans feared it would draw the United States into a foreign war that was none of her concern. America finally ended its official state of hostility against Germany by a joint Congressional resolution in 1921, but it never ratified the Treaty of Versailles or joined the League of Nations.

*Redrawing the map of Europe.* The Allies signed separate treaties with each of the other Central Powers. Each of the treaties contained the Covenant of the League of Nations. Collectively, the treaties concluding World War I redrew the map of Europe. Each of the defeated powers was forced to give up territory. Austria and

### Europe after World War I

