World War One

Overview – start to finish
1914 – 1918
Overview:

• Took place between 1914 and 1918
• Began in Europe, but ultimately involved countries as far away as Japan and the USA.
• At the time, English-speaking world knew it as the “Great War”. “World War One” was only applied decades later.
• It led almost directly to World War Two.
• WW1 was a showcase of new technologies that changed the nature, speed and efficiency of warfare completely:
  – Tanks, airplanes & submarines
  – Other motorised vehicles such as trucks & cars & trains.
  – Guns in all categories
    • Machine allowed a single soldier to take on multiple opponents at once.

• Chemical warfare so bad, countries vowed never to use it again.
• By war’s end, map of Europe began to resemble one we know today.
  – German & Austro-Hungarian Empires ceased to exist.
  – Much of Europe redivided.

• Aftermath marked the practical end of monarchy on the continent and of European colonialism throughout the rest of the world.
Total casualties:

- Around 9 million soldiers died in battle.
- Civilian loss of life totalled an additional 13 million.
- Epidemics of influenza & other disease either caused by war or exacerbated by it added at least another 20 million.
- In total: battle casualties + civilian casualties + disease = more than 40 million people.
The Start of the war:

• Began on July 28, 1914 when Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia.
  – Seemingly small conflict spread rapidly.
  – Germany, Russia, Great Britain & France were all drawn into the war, large because of treaties / alliances that obligated them to defend each other.

• Western & Eastern fronts quickly opened on borders of Germany & Austria-Hungary.
HEIR TO AUSTRIA’S THRONE IS SLAIN
WITH HIS WIFE BY A BOSNIAN YOUTH
TO Avenge SEizure OF HIS COUNTRY

Francis Ferdinand Shot
During State Visit
to Sarajevo.

TWO ATTACKS IN A DAY
Archduke Saves His Life First
Time by Knocking About a
Bomb Hurling at Auto.

SLAIN IN SECOND ATTEMPT
Laid to a SERBIAN PLOT

AGED EMPEROR IS STRICKEN

Archduke Francis Ferdinand and his Consors the Duchess of Hohenberg
Slain by Assassin’s Bullets.
Why didn’t USA enter war in 1914?

• The USA believed the war that broke out in 1914 was a European dispute over the balance of power in that continent.

• At first America public opinion was firmly on the side of neutrality.

• US foreign policy = isolationism/neutrality
Western & Eastern Fronts

• First month of combat consisted of bold attacks & rapid troop movements.
  – In the west, Germany attacked first Belgium & then France.
  – In the east, Russia attacked both Germany & Austria-Hungary.

• Following the Battle of the Marne (Sep, 5-9, 1914), the western front became entrenched in central France & remained that way for the rest of the war.
Trench Warfare

• Middle part of the war, 1916 & 1917, dominated by continued trench warfare in both east & west.

• Soldiers fought from dug in positions, striking at each other with machine guns, heavy artillery & chemical weapons.

• Though soldiers died by the millions in brutal conditions, neither side had any substantive success or gained any advantages.
Aircraft can warn of the build-up of enemy troops before an attack.

Barbed wire: metres deep and an impassable obstacle for any troops able to reach it.

No Man's Land (the stretch of land between the trenches of the opposing sides) has already been churned up by shell fire. In wet weather it becomes a mass of mud, making it even harder for troops to cross.

Concrete block house for a machine-gun.

Support trench.

Reserve trench.

Communication trenches were necessary to be brought forward without exposing them to enemy fire.

Front-line dug-outs provide protection but not against a direct hit from an artillery shell.

A deep dug-out: German ones could be 15 m below ground and too well constructed to be damaged by shell fire.

PROBLEMS FACING ATTACKING TROOPS
US involvement pre-1917

- Although officially neutral, America continued to trade with the combatants.
- Trade with Britain & France increased between 1914 and 1916.
- Trade with Germany dropped.

- Was this neutral behaviour???
  - Germany didn’t think so, although it was the British navy’s blockade of German ports that forced most American trade to be with the Allies.
Britain’s naval blockade of Germany
Despite stalemate on both fronts in Europe, two important developments occurred in 1917.

– Early April, the US, angered by attacks upon its ships in the Atlantic, declared war on Germany.
– November, the Bolshevik Revolution prompted Russia to pull out of the war.
The End of the war & armistice

• Although both sides launched renewed offensives in 1918 in an all-or-nothing effort to win the war, both efforts failed.
• Fighting continued between exhausted, demoralised troops until Germans lost a number of individual battles gradually fell back.
• Deadly outbreak of influenza also took heavy tolls on troops on both sides.
The End of the war & armistice

• Eventually, governments of both Germany & Austria-Hungary began to lose control as both countries experienced multiple mutinies from within their military structures.

• War ended in late August of 1918, after members of the Central Powers signed armistice agreements one by one.

• Germany was the last, signing its armistice on November 11, 1918
GERMANY GIVES UP; WAR ENDS AT 2 P.M.

LONDON, Nov. 7.—Germany has accepted the armistice terms laid down by the United States and the Entente Allies, and fighting has ceased.
The End of the war & armistice

• As a result of these agreements, Austria-Hungary was broken up into several smaller countries.

• Germany, under the Treaty of Versailles, was severely punished with hefty economic reparations, territorial losses, and strict limits on its right to develop militarily.
Terms of the Treaty of Versailles

• The treaty can be divided into a number of sections: territorial, military, financial and general.

http://www.history.com/topics/treaty-of-versailles/videos#treaty-of-versailles-end-world-war-i
Terms of the Treaty of Versailles

Territorial:

• Germany had a number of areas of land taken of them in Germany itself, as well as all of its overseas colonies.
Terms of the Treaty of Versailles

Military:
• German army reduced to 100,000 men.
• Not allowed tanks.
• Not allowed an air force or submarines
• Very few ships.
• Allied army to occupy one area for 15 years (the Rhineland)
Terms of the Treaty of Versailles

Financial:

• Loss of territory severely affected economy.

• Reparations (pay for the cost of the war)
Terms of the Treaty of Versailles

General – There were 3 vital clauses:

• Germany had to admit full responsibility for starting the war (“War guilt clause”).

• As she was responsible for the war, she was responsible for all the war damage caused by the First World War. Therefore she had to pay reparations.

• A League of Nations was set up to keep world peace in the future.
Why did US neutrality end?

• America was gaining economically from trading with the combatants (Britain & France) and American banks were providing them with generous loans too.

• May 1915, the *Lusitania* was hit by a German U-boat torpedo. It sank – 1200 of her 1257 passengers died – 128 were Americans.

• When America protested Germany suspended attacks for almost two years.
LUSITANIA SUNK BY A SUBMARINE, PROBABLY 1,260 DEAD; TWICE TORPEDOED OFF IRISH COAST; SINKS IN 15 MINUTES; CAPT. TURNER SAVED, FROHMANN AND VANDERBILT MISSING; WASHINGTON BELIEVES THAT A GRAVE CRISIS IS AT HAND

SACKS THE PRESIDENT

BULLETINS AT WHITE HOUSE
When Roads There Clerly, But in Silence on the Nation's Course.

ANNOUNCEMENTS OF CONGRESS CALL
Loss of Lusitania Reaches First Time of Our First Warning to Germany.

CAPITAL FULL OF HUMOR
Reports That Liver Was in Some Video Store Before Accident.

Some Dead Taken Aboard
Several Hundred Survivors at Queenstown and Kinakale.

STEAMER DODGE DISASTER
One Torpedo Crashes Into the Dressed Linner's Bow, Startling Into the Engine Room.

SHOP LIST IS EASY TO PUT
Making It Impossible to Lose Mary, Could Be Hundreds Must Have Gone Down.

ATTACKED IN BROAD DAY
Passengers at Lusitania's Morning Was Repeated by Gunmen During Last Call at New York.

Only 659 Were Saved, Few Cable Passengers
Queenstown, Ireland, May 7, 11:23 A.M.-Survivors of the Lusitania Who Have Arrived Have Not been Reported. Ninety-Seven Alive, but No One Knows of Those Ashore. The Identity was Confirmed, and Not More

The Lost Vintner's Steamship Lusitania
X Where the First Torpedo Struck. All Where the Second Torpedo Struck.
The LUSITANIA sinking on her starboard side in about 300 feet of water, and 8 miles South by West of the Old Head of Kinsale.

Only two of the BOATS this, the port, de could be launched ving to the list, but out 20 were got from the starboard.

Where the first torpedo penetrated the Engine Room.

Where the second torpedo was reported to have penetrated.

Position of the PIRATE SUBMARINE about 200 yards from the LUSITANIA, from which its cowardly GERMAN Crew were able to MURDER over 1400 innocent and defenceless people, without fear of retaliation.
BULLETIN DE VICTOIRE

Triomphe naval; — plusieurs centaines femmes et enfants hors de combat; — conquis inombrables sympathies américaines.

Dessins de L. M. P. de V. Collection.
Why did US neutrality end?

• In 1917, Germany resumed U-boat warfare- soon all shipping near Britain and France would be attacked on sight.
  – Zimmerman Telegram!!!

• America armed her ships and Germany immediately destroyed five in one week.

• President Wilson declared war.
The USA declares war

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AaVP4NPTzS8

3:49min
President Wilson’s address to congress calling for a declaration of war!

ADDRESS.

GENTLEMEN OF THE CONGRESS:

I have called the Congress into extraordinary session because there are serious, very serious, choices of policy to be made, and made immediately, which it was neither right nor constitutionally permissible that I should assume the responsibility of making.

On the third of February last I officially laid before you the extraordinary announcement of the Imperial German Government that on and after the first day of February it was its purpose to put aside all restraints of law or of humanity and use its submarines to sink every vessel that sought to approach either the ports of Great Britain and Ireland or the western coasts of Europe or any of the ports controlled by the enemies of Germany within the Mediterranean. That had seemed to be the object of the German submarine warfare earlier in the war, but since April of last year the Imperial Government had somewhat restrained the commanders of its undersea craft in conformity with its promise then given to us that passenger boats should not be sunk and that due warning
President Wilson’s response to applause from Congress after the declaration of war:

“My message today was a message of death for our young men. How strange it seems to applaud it.”
American experience in WW1

• Approx. 5 million Americans were mobilised.
  – Beg. of WW1 US army =200,000 men.
• 48,909 KIA, as many again from disease.
• 204,002 wounded.
• Fought in France alongside British & French, much needed infusion of energy and morale to the Allies.
American experience in WW1

• Americans at home mobilised to produce weapons, ammunition & uniforms.
• Contribution of women recognised with passing of 19th Amendment, giving them federal voting rights.
• Overall, govt. powers ↑ during war (e.g. control on unions).
US involvement in peace process

- Pres. Woodrow Wilson played leading role in Versailles peace process.
- He set out FOURTEEN POINTS as a basis for a treaty.
- Key point was to create ‘league of nations’ as basis for new international, moral order to prevent future wars.