

THE WAR IN EUROPE

A TRUE WORLD WAR

THE SCHLIEFFEN PLAN

- THE GERMAN PLANS FOR THE WAR WERE THE WORK OF COUNT ALFRED VON SCHLIEFFEN.
- HE PROPOSED A WAY FOR GERMANY TO WAGE A TWO-FRONT WAR IN THE EVENT THEY WERE FACED WITH ONE.
- VON SCHLIEFFEN PLANNED TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE 'WEAK FRENCH' AND 'SLOW RUSSIANS'.

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"WEAK FRENCH & SLOW RUSSIANS"

- THE PLAN CALLED FOR FIRST PUSHING MOST OF THE GERMAN ARMY AGAINST FRANCE IN A MASSIVE SIX-WEEK CAMPAIGN.
- ONCE FRANCE HAD BEEN DEFEATED, THE GERMAN ARMY WOULD THEN QUICKLY MOVE TO THE EASTERN FRONT AND FACE THE RUSSIANS, WHO WERE RUMORED TO HAVE A DISORGANIZED ARMY IN A COUNTRY SUFFERING SOME POLITICAL UPHEAVAL.

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THE IMPORTANCE OF THE RAILWAY

- THE SUCCESS OF THE GERMAN PLAN REQUIRED USING GERMANY'S VERY EFFICIENT RAILROAD SYSTEM.
- THE RAILROAD COULD QUICKLY MOVE MOST OF GERMANY'S ARMY TO THE EASTERN FRONT IN ORDER TO ATTACK THE MASSIVE RUSSIAN ARMY AFTER DEFEATING THE FRENCH...OR SO SCHLIEFFEN THOUGHT.

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FIRST: THE WEAK FRENCH

VERDUN

FIRST STRIKE: VERDUN

- THE GERMAN ARMY PREPARED TO ATTACK THE NORTHERN PART OF FRANCE WHERE THE FRENCH ARMY WAS WEAKEST: VERDUN.

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THE BEST LAID PLANS...

- AT VERDUN, THE GERMAN ARMY WOULD SWEEP AROUND THE FRENCH ARMY, AND DESTROY IT IN A MASSIVE TRAP.
- **PROBLEM:** VON SCHLIEFFEN FINISHED HIS TWO-FRONT WAR PLANS IN 1894 (20 YEARS BEFORE THE OUTBREAK OF WAR).

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THE SCHLIEFFEN PLAN HITS A SNAG:

- ALTHOUGH IT MADE SENSE TO ATTACK THE ENEMY AT ITS WEAKEST POINT, THE NECESSITY OF THE GERMAN ARMY TO FORCE ITS WAY THROUGH BELGIUM AND LUXEMBOURG WAS A PROBLEM (SINCE BOTH COUNTRIES CLAIMED NEUTRALITY).
- WE KNOW WHAT HAPPENED NEXT.

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FRANCE

SMARTING AFTER THE FRANCO-PRUSSIAN WAR

WHAT RESPONSE TO THE SCHLIEFFEN PLAN?

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ALSACE AND LORRAINE

- AFTER THE FRANCO-PRUSSIAN WAR, FRANCE WAS FORCED TO GIVE UP THE PROVINCES OF ALSACE AND LORRAINE, WHICH THEY WANTED BACK.
- THE INVASION AND RE-CONQUEST OF THESE AREAS WERE THE MAJOR PRIORITY OF FRENCH PLANNING.

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FRANCE'S 17TH COUNTER PLAN

- THE FRENCH ARMY'S SOLDIERS WOULD ALWAYS BE ON THE OFFENSIVE. WHEN IN DOUBT ABOUT A SITUATION, ATTACK.
- TO DO SO SUCCESSFULLY, THREE SOLDIERS ARE REQUIRED FOR EVERY ONE ENEMY SOLDIER.
- FOR 17TH COUNTER PLAN TO WORK, FRANCE WOULD REQUIRE WELL OVER FOUR MILLION MEN. THEY HAD LESS THAN 1 MILLION.

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THE 17TH COUNTER PLAN FAILS

- ONCE THE FIGHTING BEGAN ON THE WESTERN FRONT, THE FRENCH USED THEIR 17TH COUNTER PLAN.
- IT WAS A FAILURE, AND ACTUALLY HELPED THE SCHLIEFFEN PLAN SUCCEED.
- VERDUN SOON SAW SOME OF THE BLOODIEST FIGHTING OF THE WAR.

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ENTER THE BRITISH

- THE FRENCH IMMEDIATELY BEGAN OPERATIONS AFTER GERMANY INVADDED BELGIUM AND WERE NOT PREPARED FOR THE GERMAN ATTACK.
- THE BRITISH FINALLY ARRIVED AND TOOK UP POSITIONS IN NORTHERN FRANCE BY EARLY SEPTEMBER.
- CANADIAN TROOPS WOULD START ARRIVING OVERSEAS IN LATE OCTOBER.

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BRITISH ON THE WESTERN FRONT

- THE BRITISH ARMIES WERE TO BEAR THE BRUNT OF THE GERMAN ARMIES MOVING THROUGH BELGIUM.
- THE BRITISH AND FRENCH FORCES WERE UNABLE TO STOP THE GERMAN THRUST, BUT THEY WERE ABLE TO SLOW THEM DOWN.

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PROBLEMS ON THE WESTERN FRONT:

- COMMANDERS COULDN'T CONTROL THE MILLIONS OF SOLDIERS ON BOTH SIDES OF THE WAR DURING ITS EARLY STAGES. THEY WEREN'T USED TO THE NUMBERS UNDER THEIR COMMAND.
- NO ONE HAD NOT PREPARED FOR A LONG WAR. EVERYONE THOUGHT THE WAR WOULD END BY CHRISTMAS.
- THIS MEANT THAT NO ARMY (OR COUNTRY) PREPARED THE NECESSARY STOCKPILES OF WEAPONS OR AMMUNITION. IN FACT, ARMIES ON BOTH SIDES STARTED TO RUN OUT OF AMMUNITION AFTER THE FIRST MONTH OF THE WAR.

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WINTER ARRIVES: 1914

- THE SITUATION GREW QUIET ALL ALONG THE ENTIRE FRONT LINE OF THE WESTERN FRONT.
- EACH SIDE NEEDED TO GET OVER THE SHOCK OF THE FIRST FEW WEEKS AND RE-SUPPLY ITS FORCES WITH FOOD, AMMUNITION AND WINTER CLOTHING.

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CHRISTMAS DAY: 1914

- **DECEMBER 24, 1914:** A TEMPORARY CEASE-FIRE WAS CALLED.
- **DECEMBER 25, 1914:** AT VARIOUS POINTS ALONG THE FRONT LINES, OPPOSING FORCES GATHERED IN THE AREAS BETWEEN THE TRENCHES.
- AT THESE GATHERINGS IN "NO MAN'S LAND" MEN EXCHANGED FOOD AND GIFTS.

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NO CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

- SOME SANG CHRISTMAS CAROLS AND HELPED BURY EACH OTHER'S DEAD.
- ALLIED GENERALS WERE NOT IMPRESSED BY THIS OUTBURST OF FRIENDLINESS BETWEEN WARRING SOLDIERS.
- ORDERS WERE QUICKLY SENT OUT TO FRONT LINE COMMANDERS FORBIDDING THESE GATHERINGS.

**"SUCH UNWARLIKE
ACTIVITY MUST CEASE"**

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ACTUAL LETTER:

"I THINK I HAVE SEEN ONE OF THE MOST EXTRAORDINARY SIGHTS TODAY THAT ANYONE HAS EVER SEEN. ABOUT 10 O'CLOCK THIS MORNING I WAS PEEPING OVER A PARAPET WHEN I SAW A GERMAN, WAVING HIS ARMS, AND PRESENTLY TWO OF THEM GOT OUT OF THEIR TRENCHES AND SOME CAME TOWARDS OURS.

WE WERE JUST GOING TO FIRE ON THEM WHEN WE SAW THEY HAD NO RIFLES SO ONE OF OUR MEN WENT OUT TO MEET THEM AND IN ABOUT TWO MINUTES THE GROUND BETWEEN THE TWO LINES OF TRENCHES WAS SWARMING WITH MEN AND OFFICERS OF BOTH SIDES, SHAKING HANDS AND WISHING EACH OTHER A HAPPY CHRISTMAS.

- SECOND LIEUTENANT DOUGAN CHATER

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TOTAL WAR

A WAR OF ATTRITION

WHAT IS TOTAL WAR?

- TOTAL WAR MEANT THAT ALL ELEMENTS OF A NATION ARE MOBILIZED FOR WAR.
 - WOMEN BECAME ESSENTIAL TO THE WAR EFFORT FAR BEYOND ANY TRADITIONAL ROLES HELD BEFORE. HOW?
 - PROPAGANDA WAS USED EXTENSIVELY TO MOTIVATE THE PEOPLE TO SACRIFICE AT GREATER LEVELS.
 - CIVILIANS THEMSELVES BECAME TARGETS OF MILITARY OPERATIONS.

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ATTRITION

- COMMANDERS WHO WERE UNABLE TO COME TO GRIPS WITH THIS NEW TYPE OF WARFARE (TOO MANY SOLDIERS) DEVELOPED THE CONCEPT OF ATTRITION.
- THE IDEA WAS TO DEFEAT THE ENEMY BY DESTROYING MORE MEN AND EQUIPMENT THAN THE ENEMY WAS ABLE TO DESTROY OF YOURS.
- THE SIDE WITH THE MOST MEN AND EQUIPMENT LEFT AT THE END OF A BATTLE WOULD THEN BE DECLARED THE WINNER.
- ATTRITION OF ENEMY SOLDIERS AND EQUIPMENT BECAME A GOAL OF GENERALS TO PROVE THAT THEY WERE ACTUALLY DOING SOMETHING SUCCESSFUL.

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NEW WEAPONS

- MACHINE GUN
 - 'THE COFFEE GRINDER'
 - GERMANS USED VERY EFFECTIVELY.
- TANKS
 - A BRITISH INVENTION
 - FIRST USED DURING THE BATTLE OF THE SOMME
 - THE MAIN REASON WHY TRENCH WARFARE WAS RARELY USED IN WWII.

FIRING SQUADS

- COURT-MARTIALS:
 - CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES
 - COWARDICE
 - NEGLIGENCE
- CRIMES:
 - MURDER
 - REFUSING TO FIGHT
 - LOSING WEAPONS
 - SLEEPING ON DUTY
 - STRIKING AN OFFICER

TRENCH WARFARE

LIFE BELOW GROUND

TRENCH SYSTEM

MOST OFTEN, ENEMY TRENCHES WERE LESS THAN **100** YARDS FROM ONE ANOTHER

THAT'S LESS THAN THE DISTANCE OF THE SOCCER FIELD OUTSIDE.

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CONDITIONS IN THE TRENCHES

- SNIPERS
- COLD, WET, MUD
- MOST FIGHTING STOPPED DURING WINTER MONTHS
- TRENCH FOOT/TRENCH MOUTH
- LICE
- RATS
- SHELL SHOCK

TRENCH LIFE:

- LIFE IN THE TRENCHES WAS MISERABLE.
- MUD WAS EVERYWHERE INCLUDING CLOTHES, FOOD AND WEAPONS.
- MUDDY WATER ALSO BECAME A SERIOUS ENEMY TO THE SOLDIER.

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TRENCH FOOT

- MEN CAUGHT IT BY STANDING IN MUDDY TRENCH WATER ALL DAY.
- IF A SOLDIER TRIED TO CATCH IT ON PURPOSE TO GET DISCHARGED, HE'D BE SHOT.

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