

KEY FEATURES **OF** **MODERN HISTORY**

1

5TH EDITION

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Bruce Dennett | Stephen Dixon | Bernie Howitt | Angela Wong

OXFORD



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1

5TH EDITION

YEAR 11

Bruce Dennett | Stephen Dixon | Bernie Howitt | Angela Wong

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USING KEY FEATURES OF MODERN HISTORY 1

New South Wales' most trusted modern history series has been updated for the new Stage 6 Modern History syllabus. The first of a two-volume series, Key Features of Modern History 1 offers complete support for Year 11 teachers and their students, providing unparalleled depth and coverage and a range of new chapter features that will give students of all abilities the best chance of achieving success in Modern History.

Key enhancements:

- > All content has been explicitly aligned to the new Modern History Stage 6 syllabus (Year 11).
- > Subject experts Bruce Dennett, Stephen Dixon, Bernie Howitt and Angela Wong have developed comprehensive, engaging and appropriately levelled content.
- > Unambiguous language is used throughout the book, with plenty of visuals to engage students and support learning.
- > obook assess provides comprehensive student and teacher digital support including answers to every question in the book, class tests, videos and more.

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The Origins of the Arab-Israeli Conflict

FOCUS QUESTIONS

- 1 What is the historical origin and significance of Palestine?
- 2 What is the historical basis of the conflict between Arabs and Jews in the Middle East?
- 3 What role has Britain played in the Arab-Israeli conflict?

KEY CONCEPTS AND SKILLS

Analysis and use of sources
Due to the lengthy historical background to the Arab-Israeli conflict, you will come in contact with a wide range of sources in your studies. It is essential that you not only obtain a range of historical skills, but also analyse those sources to ensure you recognise their perspective and any potential bias.

Explanation and communication
A successful investigation into any aspect of the Arab-Israeli conflict should be able to effectively communicate what it has taken a balanced approach. One clear advantage should be ensuring that your research reflects a range of perspectives and perspectives on the issue you are researching.

Historical interpretation
This chapter brings into sharp focus the question of how historians arrive at balanced interpretations of events. As you explore aspects of this issue, you will be assessing the viewpoints of those who may be promoting particular agendas. You will need to assess potential perspectives and the way they can impact upon the overall and validity of research.

Historical investigation and research
It is crucial that you learn to recognise and deal with potential bias. You must investigate the origins and provenance of sources and, most importantly, their historical context. Critical analysis of all sources will ensure a successful investigation.

LEARNING GOALS

- > Analyse a range of sources to recognise perspective and bias
- > Understand the origins of the Arab-Israeli conflict
- > Understand how historical events and forces can impact the present

'Focus questions', 'Key concepts and skills', and 'Learning goals' are clearly stated at the beginning of each chapter to guide teachers and students through the content.

Content includes up-to-date case studies, maps and rich visual and written source material

Margin glossary definitions help students to quickly and easily find the meaning of unfamiliar terms, to aid understanding

9.2b Understanding and using the sources

- 1 Why was the October Manifesto introduced, according to Source 1?
- 2 What changes were agreed to by Nicholas?
- 3 According to Source 1b, did Trotsky's comments suggest that revolutionary activity would increase or diminish after the issuing of the October Manifesto? Explain your answer.
- 4 The following questions refer to Source 1b.
 - a Which political parties did Lenin and Kamenev belong to?
 - b Which groups wished to retain the Tsar as head of state?
 - c State two policy differences that help explain why the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks disagreed with each other.

Political developments following the 1905 Revolution

Nicholas diluted the October Manifesto. He had hoped to buy peace with concessions and, feeling betrayed when strikes and protests continued, he resorted to the methods of an autocrat. In the countryside, loyal troops moved through the villages with a campaign of burning and looting to subdue the rebellious peasants. On 16 December 1905, the St Petersburg soviet was closed and 19 of its members arrested. A general strike in Moscow led to street fighting from 21 December 1905 until 2 January 1906, resulting in deaths for the strikers and the deaths of more than 1000 workers.

Nicholas had bitterly resented having to concede a Duma, and tried to restrict its position by issuing a series of **Fundamental Laws** on 2 May 1906. These confirmed the Tsar's right to appoint his own ministers, legislate by decree and have complete control over foreign affairs. Laws passed by the Duma would require his approval. An Imperial Council, with half of its members appointed by the Tsar, would share power with the Duma.

The decision for the first Duma in 1906 and the second Duma in 1907 produced parliaments that were critical of the government, and both were dissolved by Nicholas after only a few months. Before the third Duma, Nicholas altered the electoral law to ensure that the representation of peasants, small landowners and urban dwellers was drastically reduced. While the Duma met, the prime minister, Pyotr Stolypin, carried out a policy to repress the revolutionary elements, while offering limited land concessions to the peasants. This two-pronged approach was designed to consolidate the position of the Tsar by removing his revolutionary opponents and winning the loyalty and gratitude of the peasants.

9.2b Check your learning

- 1 What do you understand by the term 'revolution'? Do the events of 1905 merit the description of 'revolution'? Why or why not?
- 2 The events of 1905 have been called a 'dress rehearsal' for the Russian Revolution of 1917. What lessons might revolutionaries have drawn from the events of 1905?

9.3 The fall of the Romanov dynasty

RUSSIA'S SOUTH-WEST FRONT LINE, 1914

War was declared between Germany and Russia in August 1914, and at first it seemed that the First World War would see the Romanov throne, too, coming to an end. Political differences were put aside as Russians joined to fight the common enemy in defence of the homeland. Volunteers hurried to join the army, and the Tsar himself took command in the first half of the year – vanishing. No strikes of any kind were recorded in the month of August 1914.

The role of the First World War in the collapse of the Romanov dynasty

At first, Russia's campaign on the south-west front seemed a story of unambiguous success. The Austrians were pushed back in Galicia, and the Germans were defeated at Gumbinnen. Then came the German response. At Tannenberg in August 1914, the Germans inflicted a heavy defeat on the Russians. Masses of prisoners, arms and guns were taken, and the Russian commander, Vladimir Samsonov, shot himself. In September, another heavy defeat at the Masurian Lakes confirmed the end of the advance against the Germans and the beginning of a three-year attempt to hold back the German advance into Russia's western provinces. There were some campaign successes against the Austro-Hungarian Army, spearheaded by Russian General Aleksei Brusilov, but the optimistic mood that had greeted the war was changed to one of increasing disillusionment.

SOURCE 21 This map shows Russia's south-west frontier in 1914, including the location of the offensive led by Brusilov in 1916 and 1917.

SOURCE 22 Russian boy soldiers are guarded by German troops after their capture at the Battle of Tannenberg, 1914.

Many chapters feature a 'Profile' which allows for more in-depth learning about a historically significant person, event or phenomenon.

15.3 Understanding and using the sources

- 1 Analyse Source 6. What is it implying about King Leopold II's control of the Belgian Congo? Research the treatment of the indigenous peoples of the Congo under Belgian control and discuss whether the attitude shown in Source 6 is justified.
- 2 Analyse Source 7 and explain what point it is making about the Age of Imperialism.
- 3 Explain how steamships such as that shown in Source 8 could change international trade and increase the value of European colonies.

15.3 Check your learning

- 1 What percentage of the planet did European countries control by 1914?
- 2 Create a flow chart that explains the two-way trade process that enriched imperialist countries in the nineteenth century.
- 3 Identify a specific example of imperialism that benefitted the trade of an imperialist country. Research its impact on the population of the colonised country.
- 4 Conduct research to identify which areas of the planet had not been colonised by Europeans by 1914.



THE EAST INDIA COMPANY

Although the spreading of Christianity and 'civilised' Western ideas were used to justify imperialist expansion, these were not the core reasons behind colonisation. At the heart of imperialism was always the desire to secure profits for business owners and shareholders. Nowhere was this more evident than in the activities of the East India Company.

Known for a range of names during its years of operation, the East India Company was essentially an English private company formed to take advantage of new trading opportunities after the defeat of the Spanish Armada of 1588. In this conflict, England broke the monopoly (total control) Spain and Portugal had enjoyed in the East Indian spice trade.

Conflict with the Dutch in what was then called the Dutch East Indies (now Indonesia) saw the Company focus its attention on India in the early seventeenth century, while also pursuing interests in the Persian Gulf, South-East Asia and East Asia.

SOURCE 9 John A. Macdonald, Prime Minister of the Dominion of Wales, in *Portrait of the Dominion: David Lloyd George* (2006). The portrait company in the film was based on the real East India Company, with the process representing freedom from imperialist powers.

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The major products the Company traded in were cotton, silk, spices, tea and opium. The latter was eventually to bring it into conflict with China in the Opium Wars. The Company, displaying its inherent 'logic' of nineteenth-century imperialism, demanded to be able to sell Indian opium in China to pay for the Chinese tea it was selling in England. Twice after China banned the sale of opium to its citizens, wars were fought to ensure the Company had the right to sell opium to the Chinese.

For around 150 years, from the 1620s, the Company transported slaves to support its economic expansion.

The Company effectively ruled India on behalf of the British crown from 1834. Reassertment of the Company's imperialist control in India eventually resulted in the Indian Mutiny of 1857. As a result of this conflict, the British Government took formal control of India in 1858, and ended the Company's Indian possessions, its administrative powers and its armies.

The Company lost all its power. It was finally dissolved in 1873, after over 300 years as a spearhead of English imperialism.



SOURCE 10 An illustration of Company officials in a procession.



SOURCE 11 A woman smokes an opium pipe in modern-day China.

15.3 PROFILE TASKS

- 1 Which event paved the way for the establishment of the East India Company?
- 2 Research the Indian Mutiny and outline why the East India Company would have been overthrown by Indians.
- 3 Analyse Source 10 and explain how it could be used as evidence to help a historian understand the relationship between the East India Company and the Indian population.

Whatever the final figure, 'Bloody Sunday' had a profound effect on the attitude of the people towards the Tsar. Instead of 'Little Father', he became 'Nicholas the Bloody'. The traditional belief that the Tsar and the people were linked in a common bond – a view that Nicholas himself liked to foster – was shattered forever.

SOURCE 14

Along the muddy pavement ... there are signs of misery and naked feet ... all dressed in their best clothes ... We had already reached the Alexander Garden, on the other side of which lay the Winter Palace square, when we heard the sound of laughter, the signal for the crowd to stop. The soldiers came as thick as flies ... on the right, was a detachment of police, but they showed no signs of hostility, the phalanx began moving again. The second was aimed at the crowd ... Police officers, the crowd began shouting again. The third ... It was quite clear that the soldiers had made a terrible mistake: they had nearly assassinated the emperor of the country ... the crowd roared, the police withdrew and the Tsar would never see them there as he had appeared on the balcony.

A. Karamzin, *The Twenty-Ninth March and the Tsar's Visit to the Palace*, 1907

SOURCE 15

I have heard the assembled crowd accused of making worse than pressing at the charges, branding the officers, and using language so dense that well men have wept, although they came, it is said, armed with knives, pieces of piping, sticks and some even with cudgels.

I do know that the commanding officer of the Infantry ... was wounded down to the knees, falling that if they did not, he would be compelled to fire on them ... the officers, on foot, would go right to among the people and try to reason with them, turning to do everything in their power to persuade the people to disperse peacefully.

Robert McCormick, the US Ambassador in St Petersburg, in *Michael Baletsky and the Russian Revolution*, 1907

9.2a Understanding and using the sources

Read the accounts by A. Karamzin and Robert McCormick of the Bloody Sunday march. In what ways do these accounts differ? How do you account for these differences?

9.2a Check your learning

- 1 Research the living and working conditions of industrial workers in Russia, around 1900.
 - a Use a mind map or other graphic organiser to summarise your findings. Explain the main grievances of the industrial working class.
- 2 Research the system of agriculture in Russia, around 1900.
- 3 Explain the main grievances of Russia's peasants.
- 4 Refer to Source 12, and find two further sources of evidence about farming methods in Russia, around 1900. Analyse these sources for their reliability.



CHAPTER 9 THE DECLINE AND FALL OF THE ROMANOV DYNASTY 141

'Check your learning' questions are given for each topic

'Understanding and using the sources' questions throughout each chapter enhance student understanding of how to use and critically analyse historical sources

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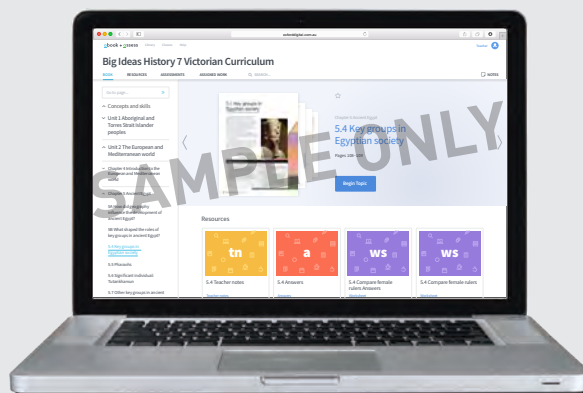
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13

The First World War

British troops heading into no man's land, Battle of the Somme, 1916

FOCUS QUESTIONS

- 1 What was the historical context of the First World War?
- 2 What are some of the key features of the First World War?
- 3 How has the First World War helped shape the modern world?

KEY CONCEPTS AND SKILLS

Analysis and use of sources

You will be exposed to a range of sources in this chapter. One of the challenges for the history student is to analyse sources and bring together the evidence drawn from those sources to develop a reasoned historical argument. Those sources and the evidence you draw from them are crucial in establishing the validity of any claims you wish to make.

Historical interpretation

You are required to form judgments about historical significance. This is particularly important in the current chapter where, in dealing with the First World War, you are investigating a major historical event that is still impacting on the world. If you are going to argue for the significance of an event, it is vital that you produce evidence to support your claims.

Historical investigation and research

As you investigate the impact of the First World War on the modern world, it is important that you access a range of sources to inform your investigation. In this chapter, you will have access to sources such as maps, images and poetry from the time, and the opinions of historians. Use these to shape the questions that will frame your research.

Explanation and communication

In order to succeed in effective communication, it is important that you know what you are trying to communicate. Investigating the impact of the First World War on your world requires the ability to explain continuity and change, and it may be useful to consider methods of communication such as comparative charts or flow charts for this purpose.

LEARNING GOALS

- > Display an understanding of the context and course of the First World War.
- > Investigate and use a range of sources to enhance and communicate understanding of the First World War and its impact.

13.1 Introduction

■ **League of Nations**
an international organisation established at the end of the First World War to maintain world peace and prevent the outbreak of future wars by encouraging nations to negotiate with each other

■ **Industrial Revolution**
the rapid development of industry, beginning in Britain in the mid-eighteenth century, in which advances in technology fundamentally changed the agricultural and manufacturing industries, as well as transport and communications

■ **Balkan states**
the countries on the Balkan peninsula in southern Europe

■ **socialism**
a political and economic theory that promotes the public ownership of a nation's resources and means of production

■ **1905 Revolution**
a revolution that sent a wave of political and social unrest throughout the Russian Empire

On 4 August 1914, after weeks of tension, hesitation and uncertainty, Europe plunged into war. The conflict was welcomed on all sides as an opportunity for glory, patriotism and adventure. Soldiers rushed to be in 'the show', in the firm belief that it would be 'over by Christmas'. It was in fact four years before the guns finally fell silent. More than 9.5 million people lay dead, and the initial enthusiasm for the 'Great War' (as the First World War had become known) had been replaced by disillusionment and the conviction that there must be no more such wars. The **League of Nations** was created in the hope of ensuring that discussion and 'right' replaced warfare and 'might'. Yet the seeds for the next war had already been sown.

The emphasis of this chapter is on enabling you to come to a clear and well-supported judgment about the role of the First World War in shaping the modern world. You will access a range of sources that will help guide your understanding of what occurred during the war, why it occurred, and how it has influenced the world that you live in today. It will encourage you to reflect on the continuities and changes set in progress by the 'war to end all wars'.

Historical context: Europe in the lead-up to the First World War

At the start of twentieth century, life for many in Europe was a prosperous and peaceful time. The **Industrial Revolution** had many positive impacts. Technological advances in agriculture and manufacturing meant that food and mass-produced goods were more affordable. Governments made improvements in housing, sanitation and healthcare, and new railways, canals and roads made transport easier. People could use telegraphs and telephones to communicate with each other immediately, and to receive news reports from around the world.

These improvements, however, were not enjoyed by all in Europe. The Industrial Revolution had less impact in Eastern European countries: Austria-Hungary, the **Balkan states** and the Russian Empire. In addition, there was still a huge gap between rich and poor, even in industrialised countries in Western Europe, such as Britain and Germany.

The century before the First World War had also been a time of new ideas. **Socialist** movements increasingly demanded political reform of Europe's rule by monarchies, and the uprisings of the 1848 revolutions swept through many countries in Europe, demanding social and political reform. In Russia, the violent reaction of imperial troops to protesters in the **1905 Revolution** would change the way the Tsar (Russian ruler) was viewed by his people.



SOURCE 1 Soldiers leaving Paris for the battlefield, August 1914



EUROPE BEFORE THE FIRST WORLD WAR



SOURCE 2 This map shows the countries Europe before the First World War and their territories

13.1a Understanding and using the sources

Compare Source 2 with a modern map of Europe. Create a list of continuities and changes that this comparison shows you.

The influence of nationalism, imperialism, militarism and alliances

Nationalism came to dominate international relations in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and was one of the key factors that brought Europe to the outbreak of hostilities in 1914. The national rivalries between the leading European powers were played out in the rapid growth of **imperialism** in the nineteenth century, as nations competed to increase their colonial territories. Another key factor that led nations into war was militarism, the race to build up their armies and navies, despite claims that they were not preparing for a war. European nations had also become involved in a complex system of alliances by the end of the nineteenth century. The alliances were meant to create a 'balance of power' and deter any conflict. Instead, when an assassin's bullet provided the trigger for war, they would pull nations one by one into the 'war to end all wars'.

■ **nationalism**
a sense of pride in, and love of, one's country; advocacy of political independence for a particular country

■ **imperialism**
the practice of extending the power of a nation, especially by acquiring territory of another nation

Nationalism

Feelings of nationalism can unite a people who share a common language, culture and history. In Europe's history, however, nationalism often involved a form of patriotism whereby people believed that their own nation was superior to others, and this led to intense rivalries between countries over territories.

In the Balkans, nationalism also led to division within countries along ethnic and cultural lines. The Balkan province of Bosnia-Herzegovina, which had become part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in the years before the First World War, comprised different ethnic groups: Bosnians, Serbs and Croats. Serbian nationalists became passionate about freeing Serbs from foreign rule to create a new Serbian nation. Some were moved to join secret societies that were willing to use terrorist actions to achieve this aim.

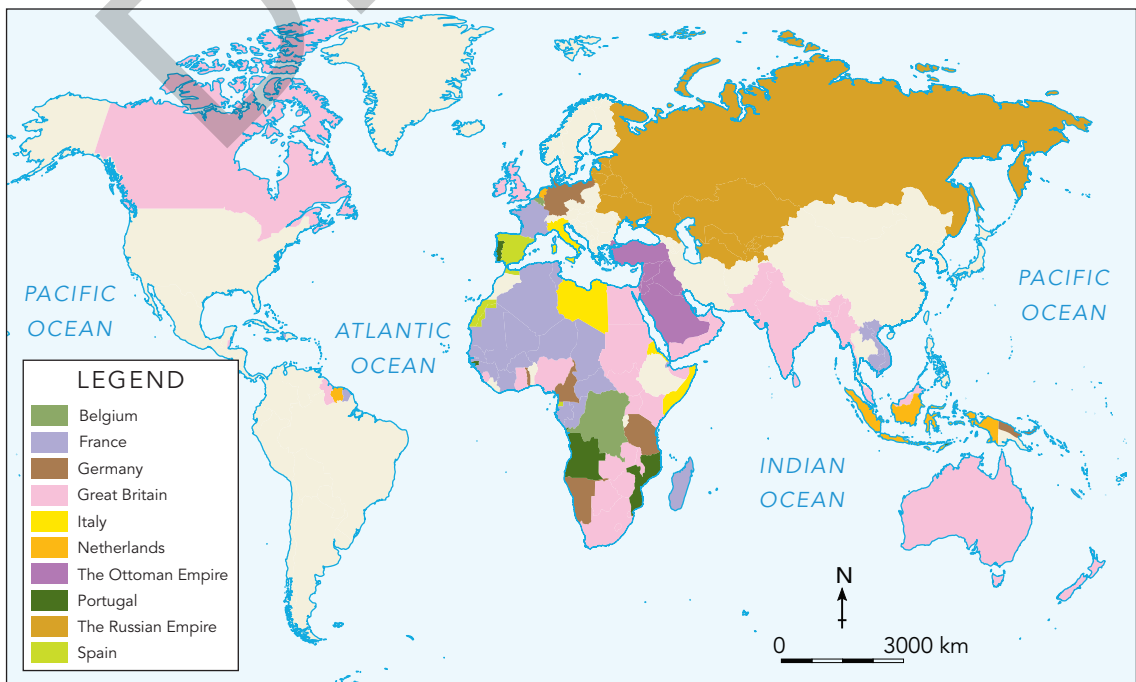
Imperialism

The European powers had been great rivals in their imperialist ambitions, as they raced to increase their power, status and wealth. Britain, Spain, France and Portugal had colonised much of the world between the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries, and by the late nineteenth century, European powers were engaged in a new wave of imperialism.

One of the impacts of the Industrial Revolution was the need to find new sources of raw materials – such as timber, cotton and oil – to feed rapidly growing industries. European economies also needed new markets for all the goods that were now mass-produced in their factories and textile mills.

The main rivals in this period were Britain, France and Germany. Germany had only become a unified nation in 1871, and its leaders were eager to build a colonial empire. In the years before the First World War, Germany unsuccessfully attempted to take control of French colonies in North Africa – German troops sent to Africa were twice defeated by French forces, with the support of Britain.

EUROPEAN EMPIRES, 1914



SOURCE 3 European empires by 1914

Militarism

As well as competing with each other over the size of their empires, the European powers became engaged in an **arms race**. Despite claims that they were not preparing for war, they were training armies and building up their stores of armaments. Between 1870 and 1914, military spending in many European countries increased on average by 300 per cent. All the major nations in Europe except Britain had introduced conscription (compulsory military service).

Britain relied on its naval supremacy to protect its vast overseas empire. When Germany started to build up its navy, Britain was compelled to increase its own naval power and the two countries' competed to build new submarines and increase their fleets of dreadnoughts, fast and powerful armoured battleships that could control the seas.

arms race

the military build-up by countries competing to have the largest military forces and the latest military technology

dominion

a territory of a sovereign or government

13.1b Understanding and using the sources

- 1 Examine Source 3. Is there any evidence to support the argument that Germany was resentful of the imperial power of the older European countries?
- 2 Analyse Source 4. Compare Germany and Britain's spending per head of population. How much was each nation spending per soldier?

COUNTRY	SIZE OF POPULATION (MILLIONS)	MILITARY SPENDING (US\$ MILLIONS)	SOLDIER NUMBERS (MILLIONS)
Germany	67	60	8.25
Britain	45.8	50	0.75
France	39.6	40	1.5
Austria-Hungary	52.8	22.5	0.65
Russia	139	15.5	1.25
Italy	35.5	10	0.75

SOURCE 4 Military spending and numbers of soldiers in key European nations, 1913–14

EUROPEAN ALLIANCES, 1914



SOURCE 5 European alliances formed before the First World War

Alliances

By 1914, the leading European nations had grouped themselves into two alliances. Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy formed the Triple Alliance, and the member nations of the rival alliance, the Triple Entente, were Britain, France and Russia (see Source 5). These groups of nations signed binding agreements that each would provide military support if one of its members was attacked.

Many other countries, colonies and territories were attached to these alliances. Japan, for example, had signed a treaty with Britain, which made it a member of the Triple Entente. British colonies and **dominions**, including India, Australia and New Zealand, were automatically a part of British agreements.

Key events and developments in the lead-up and course of the First World War

1882

The Triple Alliance is formed between Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy.

1907

The Triple Entente is formed between Britain, France and Russia.

1914

28 June: Archduke Franz Ferdinand (heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne) and his wife Sophie are assassinated in Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina.

28 July: Austria-Hungary declares war on Serbia.

Western Front

August: Germany declares war on Russia and France. Germany's Schlieffen Plan results in the German invasion of neutral Belgium on 4 August. Britain declares war on Germany. The First World War begins.

September: The First Battle of the Marne – French and British forces halt the Germans in Belgium and France. Trench warfare on the Western Front begins.

October–November: The First Battle of Ypres takes place.

Eastern Front

August–September: War begins on the Eastern Front when Russia launches an offensive against Germany on 17 August. Russian forces are defeated in the Battle of Tannenburg and the Battle of the Masurian Lakes.

Home front and other developments

August: Recruits flock to enlist. The Defence of the Realm Act is introduced in Britain to impose wartime restrictions. Britain's Royal Navy begins a blockade of Germany.

October: Turkey enters the war on the side of Germany.



A soldier wearing a gas mask rings a bell to warn of a gas attack, c. 1915

1915

Western Front

April–May: The Second Battle of Ypres takes place. Poison gas is introduced.

Eastern Front

May: German forces take command of the Eastern Front.

Home front and other developments

January: The first raid on Britain by Zeppelins (early airships) takes place.

25 April: The Anzacs land at Gallipoli.

May: A German U-boat (submarine) sinks the British ocean liner R.M.S. Lusitania, with the loss of 1198 lives, including 128 Americans.

December: Sir Douglas Haig becomes the British commander-in-chief.

A peace demonstration is held in Berlin.

Troops are evacuated from Gallipoli after eight months of fighting.

1916

Western Front

February–December: The Battle of Verdun takes place.

March: The Australian Imperial Force (AIF) joins the Allied forces against Germany on the Western Front.

July–November: The Battle of the Somme, a major British offensive, tries to break the stalemate on the Western Front. Tanks are used for the first time.

August: Paul von Hindenburg becomes the German commander-in-chief

Home front and other developments

May: Britain introduces universal conscription

May–June: The Battle of Jutland – the only major encounter between the British and German naval fleets – ends indecisively.

October: Australia holds its first conscription referendum. It is narrowly defeated.

A French soldier's grave, marked by his rifle and helmet, on the battlefield of Verdun





British soldiers marching to the front line to replace worn-out troops, 1916

1917

Western Front

March: Germans withdraw to the Hindenburg Line (Germany's formidable defensive line of trenches and concrete fortifications).

July–December: The Third Battle of Ypres takes place; it is better known as the Battle of Passchendaele.

Home front and other developments

February–March: The Russian Revolution leads to the abdication of the Tsar on 2 March.

April: German miners go on strike in the Ruhr coalfields, objecting to a cut in the bread ration.

The United States enters the war.

October: The Battle of Beersheba, a British offensive against Turkish forces, takes place. It is remembered for the charge of the Australian Light Horse Regiment.

October–December: The Bolshevik revolution in October ends the Provisional Government in Russia. The Bolshevik leader, Vladimir Lenin, signs an **armistice** with Germany in December, ending Russia's participation in the war.

December: Australia holds its second conscription referendum, which is also defeated. The British Government passes a bill to give the vote to women over 30 years old.

1918

Western Front

March: The Ludendorff Offensive begins – this is the final attempt by Germany to break through the Allied lines and win the war.

April: General Ferdinand Foch becomes the Allied commander-in-chief.

Australian troops recapture the town of Villers-Bretonneux in France from the Germans, at the cost of around 1200 Australian lives.

July: The Battle of Hamel takes place.

July–August: The Battle of Amiens begins. The first day of this battle will later become known as the 'black day for the German Army'.

The Second Battle of the Marne – the last great German offensive of the war. Its failure turns the war in favour of the Allies.

September–October: Allied forces battle to capture the Hindenburg Line. A German Army representative tells the Reichstag (German parliament) that victory is no longer possible.

November: The Kaiser (German emperor) abdicates.

The armistice is signed on 11 November and the fighting ceases.

1919

January–June: The Paris Peace Conference is held to decide the fate of Germany. At this conference, the Treaty of Versailles is drawn up, which officially ends the First World War.

13.1 Check your learning

- 1 Explain the term 'nationalism'. What are the positive and negative features of nationalism?
- 2 Does an arms race necessarily lead to a war? Give reasons for your response.
- 3 In your own words, explain the situation in Europe in 1900.
- 4 What was the potential danger of the alliance system to stability in Europe in 1914?

13.2 The outbreak of war in 1914

As we have already seen, relationships between the key European powers were dominated by complex and interrelated factors, including nationalism, imperialism, militarism and the alliance system. Historians view these simmering national rivalries as the long-term causes of the First World War. Such tensions needed a spark to provoke outright hostilities, and this was provided by the assassination of the heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, the Archduke Franz Ferdinand.



SOURCE 7 This photograph of Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife Sophie riding in their car on 28 June 1914 was taken minutes before the event that sparked the First World War – their assassination by a gunman, a 19-year-old Serb nationalist named Gavrilo Princip.

The July Crisis and the first declarations of war

The Archduke and his wife Sophie were shot at close range by a gunman as they drove through the streets of Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina, on 28 June 1914. This violent act was intended to promote the cause of Serbian nationalists. The immediate consequence was a period of threats, bluffs and failed negotiations among European nations known as the July Crisis. Tensions in the Balkans in the years prior to 1914 meant that Austria-Hungary was ready to lay blame for the Archduke's assassination on Serbia, and it issued its neighbour with 10 ultimatums. When Serbia could not comply with all of these demands, Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia on 28 July 1914.

The world at war

The alliance system now came into effect. Russia promised to support Serbia and began to mobilise its army. Germany, Austria-Hungary's powerful ally, threatened Russia with war unless it ceased this mobilisation. When this threat was ignored, Germany declared war on Russia on 1 August 1914, and two days later declared war on Russia's ally, France.

At this point, Germany rapidly put into effect the Schlieffen Plan, its long-held strategy when faced with a war on two fronts: against France on its western borders and Russia on its eastern borders. Germany had feared a war on both fronts since Russia and France had become allies in 1894. If successful, the Schlieffen Plan would mean that the German Army would not need to fight on both fronts simultaneously. The plan called for an all-out attack on France to capture Paris and achieve a quick victory on the Western Front. The German Army could then turn to the east and defeat Russia before it had time to fully mobilise its army.

To reach the French border, German troops would advance through Belgium, a neutral country. Germany hoped that the British Government would decide to stand apart and stay neutral. However, Britain had pledged to protect Belgium's neutrality, and when Germany commenced its invasion of Belgium on 4 August 1914, Britain declared war on Germany.

Other countries would later join the war. These included Italy, Japan and the United States on the side of the **Allies**, and the Ottoman Empire (Turkey) and Bulgaria on the side of the **Central Powers**. (Note that although Italy had been a member of the Triple Alliance alongside Germany and Austria-Hungary, it did not join the Central Powers as it considered the actions of its old enemy, Austria-Hungary, to be in breach of the terms of that alliance.) The colonies and dominions of the European nations would also be drawn into the conflict, including Australia as a dominion of the British Empire.

So began the world's first global conflict.

Stalemate on the Western Front

Germany's attempt to maintain the timetable imposed by the Schlieffen Plan met with difficulties. Belgian resistance was greater than expected and delayed the advance, while the British Expeditionary Force arrived to defend Paris more rapidly than the Germans had anticipated. The German Army – its troops underfed and exhausted and already delayed – suffered a further blow on nearing Paris, when 100 000 of its men were transferred to the Eastern Front to face the Russians, who had also mobilised quickly and invaded Germany.

The First Battle of the Marne, which followed, was a hard-won Allied victory. The Germans had come so close to Paris they could see the Eiffel Tower in the distance, but they got no further. The Schlieffen Plan had failed and Germany was caught in a two-front war.

■ **Allies**
the coalition of countries in opposition to the Central Powers in the First World War; they included Britain, the Commonwealth, France and Russia, which were joined by the United States in 1917

■ **Central Powers**
the coalition of countries in opposition to the Allies in the First World War; they included Germany and Austria-Hungary, which were later joined by the Ottoman Empire (Turkey)



SOURCE 8 A cartoon illustrating how the First World War escalated as a result of the alliance system

■ **stalemate**
a situation where
neither side is able to
gain an advantage

The German Army retreated to the River Aisne and began to dig trenches. The Allied armies, equally exhausted, did not have the strength to push the Germans out of France. This led to the 'race to the sea', as each side extended its trench systems and fortified them with barbed wire, machine guns and artillery defences.

By the end of the year, when many had expected the war to be over, a line of trenches stretched from the sea to the Swiss Alps, movement had ended and the war was at a **stalemate**.

War on the Eastern Front

Australian students of the First World War are familiar with the areas on the Western Front, where Australians served, but the Eastern Front is also of great significance. This theatre of war stretched from the Baltic Sea in the north to the Black Sea in the south. It included most of Eastern Europe and also stretched into Central Europe. In area, it was much larger than the Western Front.

Russia surprised Germany by sending in troops soon after the war had started. Germany's resistance was rushed but effective. By 1915, Germany was moving into Russia, and Russian troops suffered defeats in 1915 and 1916. In 1917, the Tsar of Russia was forced from office, and the **Bolsheviks** seized power.

■ **Bolsheviks**
a revolutionary
political party
led by Lenin that
seized power from
Russia's Provisional
Government in
November 1917

The spread-out nature of the Eastern Front meant that trenches were largely ineffective, and it was the mobility and training of the German troops that proved to be decisive. By March 1918, German troops were within striking distance of the Russian capital, Petrograd (formerly St Petersburg), and the Bolsheviks concluded the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk that withdrew Russia from the war and ended the war on the Eastern Front.

Although Australia was not directly involved in this action, the campaign at Gallipoli had been designed to help Russia secure and maintain its access to the Mediterranean Sea.

The Battle of Tannenberg, August 1914

The Battle of Tannenberg was the battle that halted the Russian advance into Germany in the first month of the war. So effective were the German forces that the invading Russian Second Army was effectively destroyed. The statistics tell the story. Germany's 150 000 troops were clearly outnumbered by Russia's 250 000 troops, but 78 000 Russian soldiers were killed or wounded, and 90 000 were taken as prisoners of war. It took 60 German trains to carry away all the Russian equipment that had been captured.

The Battle of Tannenberg decisively stopped any Russian advance into Germany.

13.2 Understanding and using the sources

- 1 How could a historian use Source 7 to explain the outbreak of the First World War?
- 2 Analyse Source 8 and outline what information it gives you.

13.2 Check your learning

- 1 Explain why a political assassination in Sarajevo led to the First World War. Construct a flow chart or timeline to support your explanation.
 - 2 Why was it that the Western Front developed into a stalemate, while the Eastern Front didn't?
 - 3 Explain why the Battle of Tannenberg is significant.
-

SOURCE 9 Beersheba, 1917



BATTLE OF BEERSHEBA

In the desert sands of Palestine, the Battle of Beersheba (31 October 1917) saw Australian and New Zealand troops support the British against the Ottoman Empire in one of the last great cavalry battles of modern warfare. It was effectively a battle for water, as Beersheba's wells were the only reliable water source in the area. The sight of Australia's Light Horse Regiment charging across the desert sands, with bayonets and rifles strapped to their backs, captured the romantic image of war that modern technology had driven into the mud of the Western and Eastern Fronts. Indeed, this was the style of battle that Archy Hamilton, the hero of the 1981 film *Gallipoli*, thought he was signing up for

when he joined the Western Australian Light Horse.

Among the 31 Australians killed in the charge was the Test cricketer Albert 'Tibby' Cotter, who was widely regarded as the best fast bowler of the time. Cotter, a stretcher-bearer, was shot as the troops dismounted to engage the enemy on reaching Beersheba. The walkway to the Sydney Cricket Ground is named in his memory.

Success at Beersheba helped consolidate British control in the region and, taking a longer-term view of history, could be seen as one of the factors that has led to today's conflict in the Middle East.

PROFILE TASKS

- 1 Explain what is meant by the statement that Beersheba 'captured the romantic image of war that modern technology had driven into the mud of the Western and Eastern Fronts'.
- 2 Research the sporting and military careers of Albert 'Tibby' Cotter.

13.3 Experiences of soldiers in key battles on the Western Front

The stalemate on the Western Front endured for the next three years. It was clear that a new type of war had begun to unfold. This was not a war of dash, excitement and adventure, but an 'industrial war', where the products of modern armament factories were set against flesh and bone. In this uneven contest, the power of defence was much greater than the power of offence – it was far easier to defend a trench line than to capture one.

In 1916 and 1917, military leaders on both sides attempted to break the deadlock with key battles at Verdun, the Somme and Passchendaele.

Battle of Verdun, February–December 1916

On the Western Front, the French held the **garrison** of Verdun, a great French fortress, which was surrounded by 13 massive concrete forts. German General Erich von Falkenhayn hoped to break the stalemate by forcing the French to defend Verdun, using artillery to inflict huge numbers of casualties and 'bleed the French Army to death'.

The Germans began a massive bombardment of French defences in February 1916, using 1400 heavy guns. French General Philippe Pétain was given the job of defending Verdun. This resistance became symbolic in the eyes of the French, and Pétain declared: 'They shall not pass!'



SOURCE 10 The landscape around Verdun after months of intensive shelling by German artillery

The Battle of Verdun was brutal. German artillery fired twenty-three million shells at the French, and also used new deadly weapons. Phosgene gas (see Section 13.4) was introduced to the battlefield and, for the first time, flame-throwers were used in large numbers. The forts were the scene of fierce hand-to-hand fighting in their underground passageways.

Crucial to the French was their ability to bring in reinforcements of soldiers and supplies through what became known as 'La Voie Sacrée' (The Sacred Way), the only road into and out of Verdun. Despite intensive German shelling, this vital route was never closed and, at the height of activity, it saw 6000 vehicles a day. Almost three-quarters of the French Army was brought in to defend Verdun.

The Germans called off their main attack in July 1916, although fighting continued until December, when the French recaptured most of the land won by the Germans in earlier advances. The Germans had failed to break the French resistance.

Both sides suffered huge losses, with a total of more than 700 000 men killed, wounded or missing during the 10-month battle. Of these, it is estimated that 300 000 men died, with losses roughly equal on each side.

Battle of the Somme, July–November 1916

The Battle of the Somme in 1916 has become the defining symbol of the Great War. The first day of this bloody battle was perhaps the worst ever in the history of the British Army, which suffered 57 000 casualties, including 20 000 killed.

The Somme campaign was initially devised by the British as a way to break through German lines and break the stalemate on the Western Front. Allied forces fighting with the British included troops from France, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and South Africa.

The battle began on 1 July 1916 and was preceded by a week-long bombardment of German trenches, in order to destroy the Germans' barbed wire and front-line trenches. This aim was not achieved, however, because the Germans were aware of the impending attack and prepared by digging underground chambers that allowed their soldiers to shelter from the bombardment. When the Allied troops went '**over the top**', they were confident that the German trenches were cleared; soldiers from one British regiment even kicked footballs into no man's land as they advanced. But instead, they were hit by a barrage of machine-gun fire.

Although the French troops had some success, the British did not achieve any of the targets set by their commander-in-chief, General Sir Douglas Haig, in the first two days. Nevertheless, Haig persisted and the offensive continued. After the battle, the commander wrote that he had hoped for a breakthrough at first, but then accepted that the attack must go on anyway because it drew German troops away from Verdun. The optimistic 'breakthrough' battle had become part of the **war of attrition**.

Over the course of the following months, the Battle of the Somme became a series of attacks and counter-attacks, which saw the British front line advancing a mere 15 km at its furthest extent. The campaign of attrition was only halted by the British commanders in November 1916.

Final casualties have been estimated at 500 000 on the German side, and 620 000 suffered by the Allies.

over the top

the movement by troops when they climbed up from their trenches to move forward into battle

war of attrition

a strategy to wear down the enemy with continuous actions to reduce their resources

SOURCE 11 British soldiers go over the top during the Battle of the Somme.



SOURCE 12

By the end of July, responding to every British or French advance or attempt to advance, the German infantry had made not less than sixty-seven counter attacks, large or small, that I can identify. Probably they had made a great many more, now lost in time's obscurity – possibly twice as many. This was the texture of the battle: attack, counter-attack; attack again, counter-attack again ... That is why it is so utterly pernicious to dwell constantly on the freak of 1 July, and to associate the whole battle with the image of that day ... The Somme was the turning point.

John Terraine, *The Smoke and the Fire: Myths and Anti-Myths of War, 1861–1945*, 1980

SOURCE 13

The Somme offensive was a necessary if painful stage in the process of weakening a skilful, courageous and highly professional enemy.

Peter Simkins, in Chris McCarthy, *The Somme: The Day-By-Day Account*, 1993, foreword

SOURCE 14

We may perhaps question whether the four-and-a-half month slog of the Somme was the unmitigated disaster it is usually painted. One voice worth hearing in this context is that of the German supreme commander Field Marshal Paul von Hindenburg, who was sufficiently chastened by the sufferings of his troops during the campaign to state at a conference in January 1917, 'We must save the men from a second Somme battle.' Another notable viewpoint is that of the distinguished soldier–writer Charles Carrington, who would later claim that 'The Somme battle raised the morale of the British Army. Although we did not win a decisive victory there was what matters most, a definite and growing sense of superiority, man to man ... We were quite sure we had got the Germans beat.'

M. Brown, 'Sommewhere in France', *History Today*, July 2006, Vol. 56, Issue 7, pp. 22–4

Battle of Passchendaele, July–November 1917

blockade
the act of stopping
ships from leaving or
entering ports

The year 1917 began positively for the Allies. The British naval **blockade** continued to deprive Germany of vital raw materials, the British and French gained control in the air and Allied industrial production was up. The French commander-in-chief, Robert Nivelle, attempted a breakthrough offensive in early 1917, but only succeeded in gaining less than 8 km, at great cost. He was replaced by Pétain in May 1917.

Disillusionment led to mutinies in some French units. Some scholars have gone so far as to suggest that from this point on, the French Army ceased to be a potent offensive force. This view may be extreme, but the fact remains that for the rest of 1917, the British Army had to carry the weight of the offensive.

The Third Battle of Ypres, better known as the Battle of Passchendaele, lasted from the end of July until December. Soldiers from Britain, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa once again attempted to break through German lines in Belgium. There were many frightening parallels between the circumstances surrounding the Somme in 1916 and Passchendaele in 1917. On both occasions, the British were requested to launch an attack to take pressure off the French Army, and in both battles the point of attack gave every advantage to the German defenders. Haig's decisions regarding both battles have produced much debate and criticism.

At Passchendaele, a huge bombardment of four-and-a-half million shells combined with the worst rains seen in 30 years, turning the battlefield into a quagmire. Movement became almost impossible, as men, horses and equipment got stuck in the mud. Some men who fell into craters drowned, or had their backs broken as their comrades tried to pull them out of the mud.

Passchendaele was the ultimate example of the rationale for a war of attrition. Even though the Allies suffered heavy losses, Haig argued that as long as the Germans lost more men than the British and French, the Allies would win in the end. While there had been no breakthrough, Haig claimed that the Germans were suffering a fearful defeat because of their losses. Clearly, this kind of thinking worried the politicians, who were dependent on the support of the public – a public weary of the long casualty lists in their daily newspapers. Haig's view of attrition also gave little comfort to the troops, who joked grimly about who would be left to take food and ammunition up to the last man standing.

Passchendaele cost the Allies 275 000 casualties and the Germans 200 000, for an Allied gain of just over 10 km.

13.3 Understanding and using the sources

- 1 Explain how Sources 10, 11 and 15 help you understand the conditions soldiers experienced on the Western Front.
- 2 Examine Sources 12, 13 and 14, and sources from your own research, and explain how the **historiography** of the Somme has changed over time.
- 3 Assess the Battle of the Somme. Was it a monstrous waste of life resulting from incompetent generalship, or a turning point that mortally wounded the German Army? Include relevant sources in your response.

■ **historiography**
the study of the
construction of
history

13.3 Check your learning

- 1 Outline what the Battles of Verdun, the Somme and Passchendaele were trying to achieve. Analyse how successful each was in achieving its objective.
 - 2 What does each battle reveal about the conditions under which soldiers were fighting?
-

SOURCE 15 Battlefield conditions at the Third Battle of Ypres, better known as the Battle of Passchendaele



13.4 The changing nature of war by 1918

■ Lewis gun

a type of machine gun that was mass-produced in Britain during the First World War

■ rifle grenade

a grenade-type explosive device propelled from a rifle barrel; these devices covered far greater distances than those thrown by hand

■ American Civil War

the war between the Northern and Southern states of the United States, fought between 1861 and 1865

During the First World War, both sides used scientific and industrial developments in weaponry in an attempt to break the deadlock. In 1914, the British infantryman walked to battle and attacked enemy trenches with his rifle and bayonet, a soft cap on his head. By 1918, technological and industrial advances meant that he was transported to battle in a truck, and could be armed with a **Lewis gun**, grenades, a **rifle grenade** or a flame-thrower. He now carried a gas respirator and his head was protected by a helmet. Infantry attacks were supported by barrages of high explosives, which bombarded the enemy from artillery and airplanes. Tanks were used to clear barbed wire ahead of an attack, and clouds of poison gas exploded from gas shells to terrorise the enemy.

The mechanisation of modern warfare

On the Western Front, it was the use of mechanised weapons, such as heavy artillery guns and machine guns, that gave the advantage to defenders and prolonged the stalemate. Infantrymen attacking enemy lines on foot stood little chance against a defensive force with heavy artillery, and with machine guns that could fire up to 600 rounds of ammunition per minute. The massive loss of life on the first day of the Battle of the Somme was a tragic example of this.

More fire-power was needed to break the deadlock, and the industries in the Central Powers and the Allied nations now bent their efforts toward mass production of the weapons that could provide it.

In addition to the fire-power laid down by their heavy artillery, military leaders in the First World War were the first to use tanks and aircraft. These developments in mechanised warfare could be used to counter the enemy's artillery fire during an attack, and increase the chances of a rapid advance and victory.

Guns and artillery

Machine guns had been used in the **American Civil War** and their fire-power was improved in the First World War. They gave defenders the ability to cut down the approaching enemy in numbers that could not have been imagined before the Battles of the Somme and Verdun.

Heavy artillery guns fired large shells over a long distance, hitting their targets from above. However, although they were mounted on wheels, the weight of artillery weapons meant they were difficult to move into the desired positions and often became bogged down in mud or stuck in craters.



SOURCE 16 German soldiers using a machine gun, in the First World War, c. 1916

Tanks

Tanks were first introduced to the battlefield on the Somme in September 1916. Tanks' main uses were to flatten barbed-wire obstacles and take out nests of enemy machine gunners. They also gave advancing soldiers some shelter from enemy fire.

These early tanks lacked the capacity to seriously affect the course of events. Only small numbers were available, and their slowness meant they could neither spearhead an attack, nor punch a hole in the enemy line to open the way for a major advance. They were limited in the terrain in which they could be used – they could not operate safely in built-up areas, woods, or over badly cratered or muddy ground, which excluded a good proportion of the areas where infantry needed it most.

Tank crews in the First World War faced a risk of carbon-monoxide poisoning, overheating or 'seasickness'. The tanks were deafeningly noisy for those inside, and the crews' visibility was also extremely limited.

Between 1916 and 1918, tanks were never more than an auxiliary to the infantry, with only slightly greater speed than a foot soldier.



SOURCE 17 A British Mark IV tank doing what it did well – crushing barbed wire.

Aircraft

Modern warfare unveiled a new form of terror: attack from the air. Until 1916, German air raids were mainly carried out by Zeppelins – huge, hydrogen-filled balloons, with the crew slung underneath in a gondola. At first, there was little protection against the Zeppelins. Anti-aircraft guns were hopelessly inadequate, the shells exploding well below the height of the airships. In September 1916, however, the first airship was shot down over England, and by the end of that year the Zeppelin had had its day as an offensive weapon, though they were still used sporadically in raids until August 1918.

The Zeppelin was succeeded by the German Gotha bomber plane and its British equivalent, the Handley Page Type O.

In all, there were 53 Zeppelin raids and 57 aeroplane raids over Britain during the war, resulting in about 1400 deaths and 3400 injuries. These signalled an important change in the nature of modern warfare: women, children, the sick and the elderly were – in their own homes – now in the front line.

Britain was not the only country to face an aerial onslaught during the war. Gotha planes also attacked Paris and although Berlin was too distant, British and French aviators bombed many other German cities, especially in the Ruhr and Rhineland industrial areas in 1918. As in Britain, civilian morale in Germany was shaken by these attacks. German casualties from Allied aerial bombing were 740 killed and 1900 wounded.



SOURCE 18 Mounting bombs on a German Gotha bomber before take-off

Gas: a breakthrough weapon?

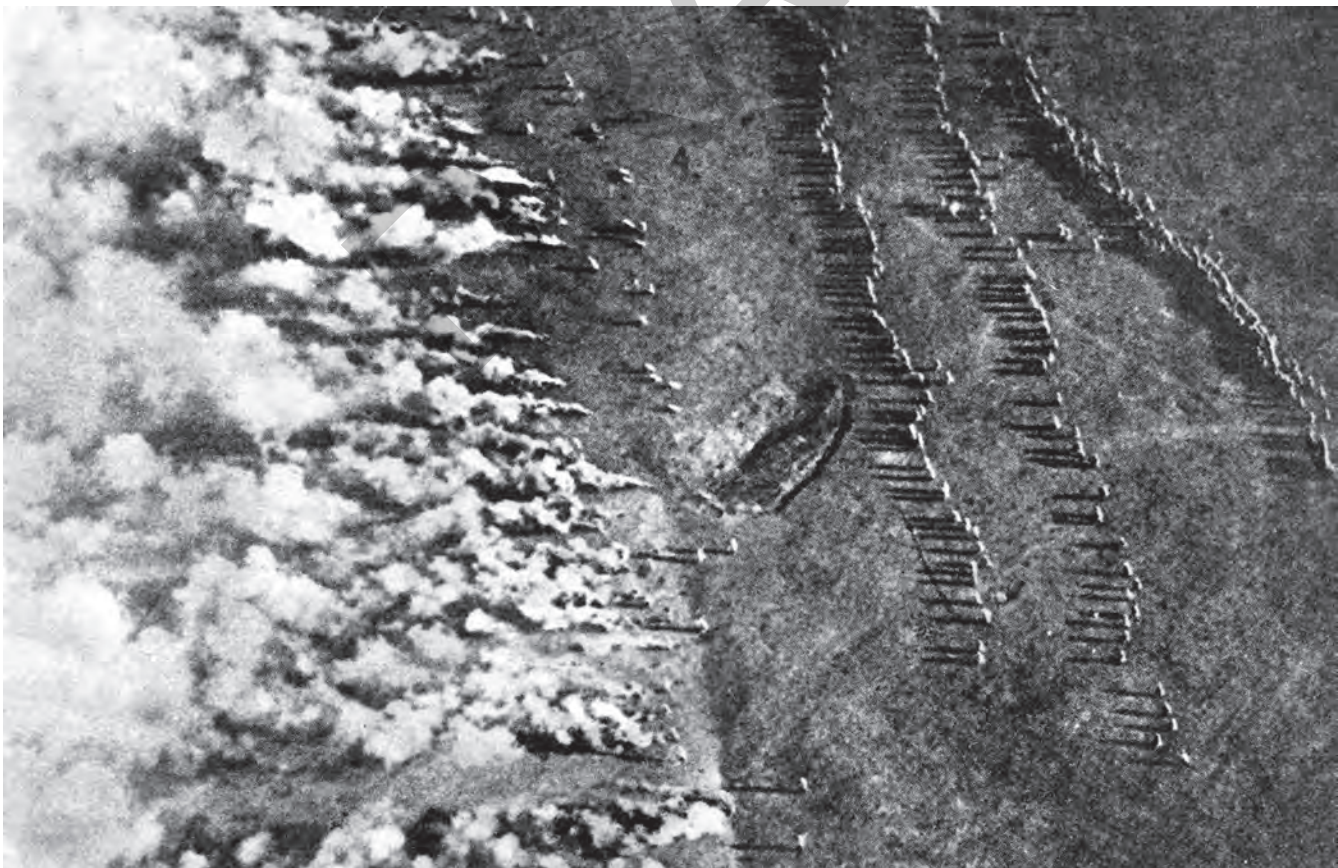
Chemical warfare was one of the scientific developments designed to break the deadlock on the Western Front. Three types of gas were used as weapons:

- > Chlorine caused difficulty in breathing, a burning sensation in the throat and chest pain.
- > Phosgene was more sinister and deadly because it did not cause coughing and irritation on first contact, like chlorine; thus, victims were exposed to larger doses for longer periods without realising it. The vast majority of all gas-related fatalities in the war were caused by phosgene.
- > Mustard gas led to blistering of the skin, airways and lungs, and even blindness. While death rates from mustard gas were relatively low, its effects were debilitating, and those affected required long-term, elaborate care.

Protective measures against gas were initially primitive, with soldiers told to urinate on a sock or piece of cloth and place it over their mouth and nose. Various types of gas mask were tried, until in 1917 the small-box respirator was developed, which gave effective protection.

At first, gas was released from cylinders, and thousands of these were carried to the front line. However, winds made gas difficult to control once it was released. From 1916, the French and Germans used gas shells, but these had limited use.

On the Western Front, the use of gas was occasionally effective, but never decisive. Gas was not the new breakthrough weapon that had been hoped for.



SOURCE 19 An aerial photo showing one of the first poison attacks using gas, taken over Belgium in April/May 1915

SOURCE 20

Not a cruel method. I look upon it as the most humane element in war. It should be said that of our gas casualties only 3 or 4 per cent died and of those that lived nearly all of them are getting well ...

Response by General William Sibert of the US Chemical Warfare Service during the First World War, when asked whether he considered gas to be a cruel method of warfare, in Donald Richter, *Chemical Soldiers*, 1994, p. 219

SOURCE 21

Gas! Gas! Quick, boys! – An ecstasy of fumbling,
Fitting the clumsy helmets just in time,
But someone still was yelling out and stumbling
And floundering like a man in fire or lime ...
Dim through the misty panes and thick green light,
As under a green sea, I saw him drowning.

In all my dreams, before my helpless sight,
He plunges at me, guttering, choking, drowning.

If in some smothering dreams, you too could pace
Behind the wagon that we flung him in,
And watch the white eyes writhing in his face,
His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin;
If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood
Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs,
Obscene as cancer, bitter as the cud

Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues, –
My friend, you would not tell with such high zest
To children ardent for some desperate glory,
The old Lie: *Dulce et decorum est Pro patria mori*.*

Wilfred Owen, 'Dulce et Decorum Est', written during the First World War and published posthumously in 1920. Owen was killed in action in 1918, just one week before the signing of the armistice.
*It is sweet and fitting to die for one's country.

SOURCE 22 A French soldier and his dog head to the Western Front, 1919.



Advances in communications

The development of telephone and wireless radio systems allowed instant communication between the front line and commanding field officers, who were behind the front line. However, telephone lines could be easily damaged by artillery fire or tank movements. Soldiers continued to act as 'runners', moving backwards and forwards through the trenches to relay information.

Advances in medicine

As weaponry designed to destroy lives developed rapidly, so too did medical technology designed to save lives. For example, a soldier whose thigh was broken in the conflict in 1914 had an 80 per cent chance of dying; but by 1916, that rate had changed to an 80 per cent chance of survival, thanks to the use of the Thomas splint. By the end of the war, mobile X-ray machines were brought to the front, nurses and surgeons were stationed much closer to the battles to treat injuries more quickly, and blood transfusions were available to help treat massive blood loss. At home, medical technology to produce prosthetic limbs and aid in facial reconstruction improved to meet the urgent need of soldiers disfigured by their wounds. Awareness of the dangers of bacteria and infection also increased dramatically.



SOURCE 23 French medics locating a bullet with an X-ray machine at a French field hospital during the First World War

13.4 Understanding and using the sources

- 1 Contrast the views about gas warfare shown by General William Sibert in Source 20 and Wilfred Owen in Source 21. How would you account for the differences?
- 2 Research the life of Owen. Would you regard the view of Owen or Sibert as the more reliable source to provide an understanding of the impact of gas warfare? Explain your reasoning.
- 3 Analyse Sources 16, 17, 18, 19 and 23 and explain how each source contributes to your understanding of the developments of the First World War.

13.4 Check your learning

- 1 Create a timeline or flow chart that shows the changes in warfare that occurred during the First World War.
 - 2 As a class, debate whether the First World War had greater success in creating or curing injuries.
 - 3 Identify which area of change in war technology you feel made the greatest contribution to the First World War and explain, using evidence, why you have made this selection.
-

13.5 The impact of war on civilians

home front

those citizens who remain at home during a war; the home front typically includes women, children and the elderly

total war

a war in which all aspects of society are involved

Prior to the First World War, wars had traditionally been fought by men on battlefields, often in distant lands. The First World War was different. The communities left behind became more than spectators awaiting news of battle; they became participants. They joined another front in the war – the ‘home’ front – that became vital to the outcome of the conflict.

The involvement of the **home front** led to the First World War becoming the first **total war**.

Impact of war on civilians

Civilians often found they had no choice about being involved in the war. Invading armies and the mass destruction wrought along the Western Front ensured that simply living where you had always lived suddenly became impossible. Civilians fled from newly created war zones as the Germans launched their invasion through Belgium and into France. More than 150 000 Belgian refugees sought shelter in Britain in the early years of the war, returning home years later to their shattered landscape, to try and rebuild their villages, their farms and their communities. This was a story repeated across Europe, as families fled and communities were destroyed.



SOURCE 24 French civilians flee the advancing German Army, 1915.

Impact of the war: the home front

The war had a deeper and more profound impact on the German home front than it did in Britain. The British experienced food shortages and rationing, but the German food shortages were more severe and the German Government's regulation of domestic labour, industry and agriculture was more extensive. Germany had more than three-and-a-half million civilians engaged in war work, the greatest number of any aggressive power. Food and fuel rationing eventually led to strikes and the breakdown of the German economy.

Britain focused its home front on ensuring the continued supply of all the munitions and products necessary to conduct war. The government took on extensive measures to ensure control of the home front. The Defence of the Realm Act (DORA) in 1914 gave the government extraordinary powers over the lives of its citizens and banned a range of activities, including flying kites, buying binoculars, feeding bread to animals and buying alcohol on public transport. People could be arrested without a warrant, and workers could be directed to do specific jobs. Emphasis was put on civilians producing food because of shortages, and food rationing was introduced.

Germany's food shortages soon became much more serious than anything experienced by the British home front. Germany largely relied on imports for food, and the British Navy's blockade of German trade proved an effective weapon. As shortages and heavy winters had an increasing impact, substitute products replaced foods that were no longer available. Coffee, for example, was made from roasted barley, rye, chicory and figs. Bread was known as K Bread or Kriegsbrot (war bread). At times, K bread was made with potatoes, turnips or rye, and by 1918 it contained large amounts of sawdust and chalk.

These deprivations of food and freedoms at home increased opposition to the war.

SOURCE 25

GERMANY IS STANDING AGAINST A WORLD OF ENEMIES WHO WOULD DESTROY HER!

I. We have enough breadstuffs in the country to nourish our population until the next harvest, but nothing must be wasted.

II. Breadstuffs must not be used as fodder.

VI. Do not despise even a single piece of bread because it is no longer fresh.

VII. Do not cut off a slice more than you need to eat. Think always of our soldiers in the field who, often in some far-off, exposed position, would rejoice to have the bread which you waste.

VIII. Eat war bread. It is recognisable by the letter K. It satisfies and nourishes as thoroughly as any other kind ...

IX. Whoever first peels potatoes before cooking them wastes much. Therefore, cook potatoes with the jackets on.

X. Leavings of potatoes, meat, vegetables, etc., which you can not use, do not throw away, but collect them as fodder for cattle.

A notice that was prominently displayed on public transport, and in shops, restaurants and other public places in Germany, in H.W. Wilson, *The Great War*, Vol. 4



SOURCE 26 Germans in Berlin crowd around a mobile soup kitchen during the First World War.

13.5a Understanding and using the sources

How do Sources 25 and 26 help historians understand the life of civilians during the war?

13.5a Check your learning

- 1 Explain in your own words what you understand by the term 'total war'. Justify why it is an appropriate term to use to describe the First World War.
- 2 Describe the impact of the war on civilians across Europe.
- 3 Canadian historian Margaret MacMillan suggests that one of the significant impacts of the First World War was that governments seized power and exerted control over citizens that they have been reluctant to relinquish since. What evidence can you find here to support this view?



SOURCE 27 British women training as fire fighters during the First World War

The changing role of women in Britain

Britain in 1914 was still a society dominated by class. Upper- and middle-class women knew little of labour-based work until the advent of war, but widespread shortages meant that women of every class took up employment in areas where men had previously dominated. The manufacturing of munitions became a key area, but women became involved in other sectors of the economy, including transport, education, banking, finance and administration. For working-class women, whose lives had always been physically demanding, the war meant higher wages; but for upper- and middle-class women, the war years often meant their first experience of any form of employment.

This situation did not survive the war, however. Two years after the war ended, there were fewer women in work than there had been before the war, and returning servicemen often felt they had to protect their jobs from women. It was in the political arena that women found more success. The contribution of women to the war effort convinced most members of parliament, who were overwhelmingly male, that women had earned a fuller place in society. Previously, women in Britain had not been allowed to vote, but in December 1917 a bill was passed to give the vote to all women over 30 years of age. In this way, the war had enabled women to achieve a change, where a long campaign before the war had failed.

13.5b Understanding and using the sources

Explain how Source 27 either confirms or challenges the information on the changing role of women in Britain during the First World War, outlined above.

13.5b Check your understanding

- 1 List the ways in which British women aided the war effort.
- 2 What benefits did British women gain from their experiences of war work?
- 3 How did the experience of British women during the war represent continuity and change?

Recruitment and conscription in Britain and Germany

Before the war, the Germans had a tradition of conscription for military training and service, which meant that they entered the war in 1914 with a well-trained army of more than three million soldiers. By the end of the war, this had grown to eleven million. Britain, on the other hand, started the war with a small volunteer army of 730 000 men. Calls for volunteers were promoted throughout all areas of society and, by late September of 1914, more than two million men had volunteered.

Germany maintained its numerical superiority because of its efficient and accepted conscription system. Britain initially relied upon voluntary enlistment, but as the numbers of casualties mounted rapidly, Prime Minister H.H. Asquith introduced a conscription bill to parliament in January 1916. This bill targeted all single men between 18 and 41, but in May this was expanded to include married men.

The mass destruction at the Somme basically ended Britain's volunteer army, and it relied on conscripts from late 1916. In 1918, the upper age for conscription was raised to 51. The total number conscripted was two-and-a-half million, which along with support from the Empire and Allies, enabled Britain to outlast Germany.

By the end of the war, more than five million British men had served.

SOURCE 28

We thought it would be a novelty, you know, none of us had ever been out of England. To see another country, we thought that was a great thing. We were raw country lads who'd never seen nowt ... you had the impression you'd grown up from being a lad to a man. We were patriotic. It had been driven into us a bit that Germany wanted England, that's all we knew. We were young, strong lads, and thought we should go and help the old soldiers out.

Volunteer soldier George Littlefair, in R. van Emden and S. Humphries, *Veterans*, 1998, pp. 18–19.



SOURCE 29 A 1914 British recruitment poster, featuring Lord Kitchener, Secretary of State for War, who organised the largest volunteer army Britain had ever seen

propaganda information, especially of a biased or misleading nature, used to promote a political cause or point of view

13.5c Understanding and using the sources

- 1 Describe the method used in Source 29 to persuade men to enlist.
- 2 What does Source 28 indicate about the level of knowledge of many would-be recruits? Is there any evidence that these young men had been influenced by **propaganda**?
- 3 How useful and reliable are Sources 28 and 29 for a historian studying the home front in Britain at the beginning of the war?

13.5c Check your learning

- 1 Explain why Germany was able to enter the war with a large, well-trained army in 1914.
- 2 Explain why Britain had to resort to conscription during the First World War.

Propaganda and censorship in the First World War

Propaganda is an attempt to spread or encourage a particular idea or ideas. Though it can be a collection of lies, the best propaganda relies upon a seed of truth, even though it may be necessary to exaggerate or distort that truth. The apparently ruthless behaviour of the German armies in Belgium and the use of U-boats meant that British propagandists had a wealth of material to draw on to portray Germans as inhuman, or as bullies and aggressors.

Posters and cartoons

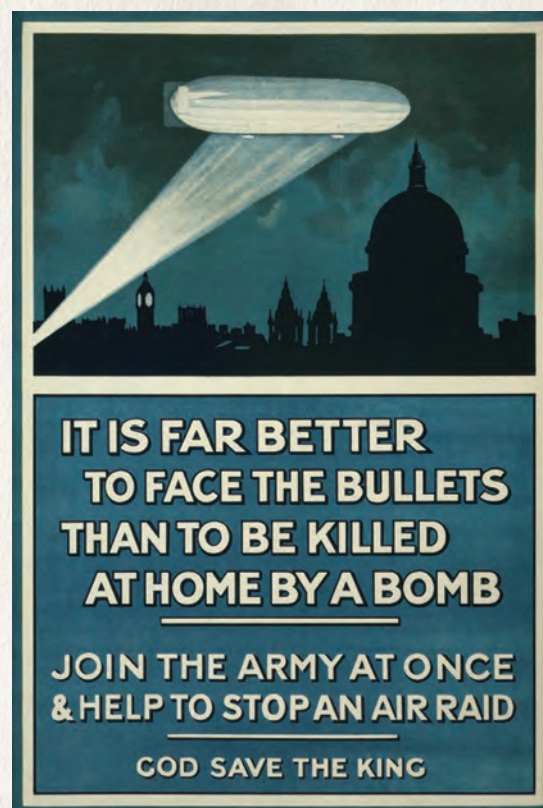
Posters and cartoons were a common propaganda device. Their messages reinforced positive feelings about your own side and negative images of the enemy. Much British propaganda was originally produced voluntarily by patriotic and eager publishers; however, the British soon began to organise and control their propaganda flow through agencies such as the War Propaganda Bureau.

Compared to the British propaganda effort, German propaganda lacked coordination and was largely undertaken by a number of private groups. Circulation both of newspapers and of magazines rose in Germany during the war, with people eager for news; however, there appears to have been a growing lack of public confidence in these publications. The military was clearly unhappy with the domestic propaganda effort and set up its own news source, the *Deutsche Kriegsnachrichten* (German War News).

Like the British, the Germans sought to justify the war. The 'encirclement' of Germany by enemy forces was a constant feature of published stories, as was the suggestion that the war was somehow a plot by rivals to suppress German *Kultur* and deny Germany its true and deserved position of greatness.



SOURCE 30 A cartoon shows the devil and a German soldier looking gleefully at a monthly report, which contains the numbers of civilians killed. This is an example of the type of propaganda that was used to drum up public support for the war effort.



SOURCE 31 A war poster, 1915



As with Allied propaganda, the Germans did not hesitate to use and embellish stories of atrocity; censorship and outright lies were well-established aspects of German propaganda. Examples of this approach were the falsification of casualty figures (an approach not unique to Germany), exaggeration of German resources, and inaccurate news from the battlefield. The German public was told that the war had begun with a French invasion of German soil.

Censorship in the First World War

Censorship was in many ways virtually indistinguishable from propaganda, and was designed to minimise bad news or keep it from the public entirely. In April 1915, Britain's Directorate of Special Intelligence (DSI) was set up to coordinate all censorship and intelligence activities. Censorship of mail offered excellent opportunities for finding suitable themes on which propaganda might be based.

In the trenches, soldiers were forbidden to keep diaries, a regulation that they bypassed by writing on scraps of paper, or keeping notes illicitly. It may seem surprising that there are so many war memoirs, but it should be remembered that nearly all letters were censored by a soldier's own officers, and often not especially rigorously.

There was also the 'green envelope system'. Soldiers were given one green envelope per month, in which they could send uncensored letters to their loved ones. The system was based on trust; the soldiers had to verify that these letters included only private and family matters, enabling them to write about personal things that they did not wish their immediate superiors to see. Random green envelopes were opened at headquarters as a deterrent, and if a soldier was found to have betrayed the trust placed in him, he would be punished.



SOURCE 32 An anti-English propaganda poster, c. 1916. The text reads: 'He is to blame, when you have to struggle and bleed, when you have to do without, when you must save light and coal, when you need ration books, when you cannot return to your peacetime work! The arch enemy is England! So, remain united! Remain strong! And you will assure Germany's victory!'

13.5d Understanding and using the sources

Analyse Sources 30, 31 and 32.

- 1 Identify each one as either British or German, and summarise the messages they are conveying.
- 2 Are they promoting positive views of their own side, or a negative view of the enemy?
- 3 Rank them in order of effectiveness, and explain your rankings.

13.5d Check your learning

- 1 What is propaganda? Why was it so important in the First World War?
- 2 What were the two basic approaches to propaganda used by both sides during the war?
- 3 Why was British propaganda more effective than German propaganda?
- 4 Explain why censorship was thought to be important during the war.

13.6 Victory and peace

In 1917, two events occurred that changed the course of the war: the entry of the United States into the war, and the withdrawal of Russia from the Eastern Front. Intense fighting continued on the Western Front in the closing months of 1918, but the extent to which the morale of the German Army had collapsed was clear. On 2 October 1918, the German Army's high command told the German Reichstag that victory in the war was no longer possible. In early November – with the Austro-Hungarians signing an armistice and the threat of revolution growing in Germany – the Kaiser abdicated and fled to Holland. At 5 a.m. on 11 November 1918, the **armistice** was signed and came into operation six hours later, thus ending the war at the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month of 1918.

armistice
the agreement made by opposing sides in a war to stop fighting



SOURCE 33 The front page of the Daily News, 12 November 1918

An overview of the reasons for the Allied victory

- > *The British naval blockade* – this was effective in depriving Germany of the food and raw materials it needed to continue the fight over a longer period. As to the overall effectiveness of the blockade, Allied commander-in-chief Ferdinand Foch stated that the final victory in the First World War was due 50 per cent to the military and 50 per cent to the blockade.
- > *Improved Allied tactics* – under Foch's direction, attacks on the Germans came in different directions from the French, the British and the Americans in a never-ending series of jabs that wore down enemy resistance. In the Battles of Hamel and Amiens in 1918, Australian General John Monash and British General Douglas Haig pursued carefully planned, closely defined engagements, avoiding the futile battles of attrition of former years. By this time, the Allied commanders had learnt to use artillery, tanks and aircraft in well-coordinated attacks. New strategies spared their troops from high casualties; for example 'bite and hold' tactics, where soldiers did not push beyond the protection offered by their artillery, gaining and consolidating small gains in territory before moving on.
- > *Fire-power* – the Allies had developed an overwhelming industrial supply of weaponry. British factories were delivering large quantities of tanks, machine guns, Lewis guns, **trench mortars** and shells. Artillery, and the constant supply of it, was a key factor in victory on the Western Front. The British war economy, now increasingly aided by the Americans, could supply it; the German war economy could not.
- > *Manpower* – both sides were running out of men and an important factor, therefore, was the growth in numbers with the arrival of the Americans in 1917. The first sustained US offensive took place at the end of May 1918. The growing numbers of fresh US troops were to provide a source of manpower that the Germans could not match. By 1918, many German units were commanding boys, older men or repatriated prisoners, who had already experienced enough of war.

trench mortar
a short, stumpy gun firing bombs at high angles to drop into enemy trenches; it was designed to be fired from trenches without exposing soldiers to enemy fire



The effects of the war in giving rise to the Russian Revolution

When war was declared in 1914, it seemed that the conflict would save the threatened Romanov dynasty – and its head, Tsar Nicholas II – and not destroy it. Volunteers hastened to join the Russian Army, and the Tsar blessed the troops as they left for the front. Political differences were put aside as Russians joined to fight the common enemy in defence of the homeland.

The Russian Empire, however, was inadequately prepared for modern warfare. Supplies of weapons, ammunition and clothing for the troops proved hopelessly inadequate. After some initial successes, the pattern for the war on the Eastern Front was soon set by the German victories at Tannenberg and the Masurian Lakes in August and September 1914. By the end of 1915 Russia had suffered three-and-a-half million casualties.

As resources went to the war effort, food supplies in Russian cities dwindled and prices rose. There were 268 strikes in January and February 1917 alone. Increasing discontent with the war and the leadership led to revolution and the abdication of the Tsar in March 1917. Though the Provisional Government that replaced the Tsar attempted to continue the war, the failure of its last major offensive in July 1917 strengthened the calls of anti-war revolutionaries within Russia, led by Lenin's Bolsheviks.

With little direction from the government and increasing rates of troop desertion, war on the Eastern Front effectively ended in 1917. When the Bolsheviks took power in November 1917, the formal ending of the war was only a matter of time and negotiation. Russian and German delegates signed the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk on 3 March 1918.

From this point, the revolution would lead to the rise of the Soviet Union from the ashes of Russia. With its **communist** ideology and a determination to support revolution elsewhere, the Soviet Union was the polar opposite of the rapidly emerging power of the United States. They would fight as allies during the First World War, but the divisions that would shape the second half of the twentieth century were falling into place as it ended.

■ **communism**
an economic system in which the means of production (for example factories, farm and machinery) are publicly owned by the state, and goods are distributed equally according to need, as opposed to privately owned and controlled systems such as capitalism



SOURCE 34 Bolshevik leader Vladimir Lenin addressing the crowd in the Red Square, Moscow, 1919, one year after the end of the war

13.6 Check your learning

- 1 How did British tactics change and improve in the second half of the war?
- 2 Why was the United States' decision to join the war on Britain's side in 1917 so critical to the outcome?
- 3 How could the First World War have been the salvation of the Tsar and the Romanov dynasty? Why wasn't it?
- 4 Identify the group that eventually won power in Russia during the revolution, and research its tactics and ideology. Why would Western countries such as Britain and the United States have been so opposed to this group and its beliefs?

13.7 The nature and legacy of the First World War and its influence on modernity

■ **Blitzkrieg**
a military tactic used by the Germans that included short and fast attacks using a range of mobile weapons, such as tanks and air attacks

The First World War was a war of attrition, and introduced the world to the concept of total war. It started out with Germany's high hopes of a rapid **Blitzkrieg** (lightning war) into France, and Britain's belief that the 'big show' would be over by Christmas 1914. Soldiers believed they were fighting the 'war to end all wars', and that they would give the generations that followed a peaceful world in which to prosper. Yet within a generation the world would be at war again.

SOURCE 35

The cold numbers capture much of the war's horror: more than 9 million men dead and twice as many again wounded – a loss of sons, husbands and fathers but also of skills and talents. Graves in the north of France and Belgium and war memorials across the US bear witness to the 53 000 American soldiers who died. Thousands of civilians died, too, during the war itself, whether of hunger, disease or violence. And then, as the guns were falling silent, a new pestilence struck humanity in the shape of a virulent influenza. As troops returned home, they unwittingly helped carry the disease around the world. It has been estimated that 50 million died.

Margaret MacMillan, 'The First World War: The war that changed everything',
Wall Street Journal, 20 June 2014

As well as being one of the defining events of the twentieth century, the First World War left an enormous legacy that is still being felt in today's world. Historians argue that it was this war that shaped the world we are all living in. Consider the following summary of points raised by the Canadian historian Margaret MacMillan in a *Wall Street Journal* article (quoted in Source 35) commemorating the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War in 2014. Some of the seminal changes she attributes to war include:

- > many modern national boundaries being established
- > many governments establishing more direct control over their civilian populations
- > attempts to establish an international body to avoid future conflicts
- > the collapse of traditional empires, such as Austria-Hungary and the Ottomans
- > the brutalisation of European society that led to violence becoming an acceptable way to resolve differences
- > a lack of trust in governments to deliver peace and security

SOURCE 36

The French National War Cemetery at La Targette



- > a fall in church attendance and an increase in alcohol consumption
- > the hastening of the end of colonial empires, as colonies that contributed troops to the war effort saw at first hand the myth of European superiority
- > recognition of the problem of how to end major wars without starting new conflicts
- > the impact of the West's rejection of Japanese and Chinese claims in the peace settlement
- > the reinforcement of America's sense of **exceptionalism**.

These changes all have implications for the modern world. That same year, the *Wall Street Journal* also ran a centenary article called '100 years, 100 legacies', which detailed 100 legacies from the First World War that it believed continue to influence life today. These included:

- > the massive migration of African Americans from the Southern states to the North, in search of work in rapidly expanding industrial cities such as Chicago and Detroit
- > the development of a sense of national identity among Australians and New Zealanders
- > the popularisation of condoms as a means of combating the massive spike in sexually transmitted diseases
- > the introduction of daylight saving as a method of preserving energy and gaining more productive daylight hours.

The world today evidently has many roots in the First World War. In Source 37, MacMillan makes her perspective very clear.

SOURCE 37

We should not see it merely as something of historical interest, a series of sepia photographs showing people who are quite alien to us. We are still living with the results of that war, and we face similar concerns. How, for example, does the world deal with powers whose leaders feel they must have their place in the sun? For Germany then, read Russia now. Or how can we rebuild societies after deeply damaging conflicts – in Europe then, but in Central Africa, the Middle East or Afghanistan today? A century after the assassination of an Austro-Hungarian archduke in the streets of Sarajevo, it may be that looking back to The First World War can still help us toward a more peaceful future.

Margaret MacMillan, 'The First World War: The war that changed everything',
Wall Street Journal, 20 June 2014

exceptionalism
the belief that something has special qualities that place it above others; the most common usage of this term is linked to the self-belief of the United States

13.7 Understanding and using the sources

- 1 What evidence does Margaret MacMillan use to support her contention that 'cold numbers capture much of the war's horror?'
- 2 Discuss how MacMillan's inclusion of a reference to civilian casualties helps you understand the concept of total war.

13.7 Check your learning

- 1 Discuss why the First World War wasn't the 'war to end all wars.'
- 2 Discuss the impact you think the First World War has had on the world today. How does this represent the value of studying history?
- 3 Analyse MacMillan's list of changes, above. Explain which you think are the most significant three, and justify your selection.
- 4 Conduct some online research to find the '100 years, 100 legacies' article, or a similar article, and identify how many legacies of the First World War have had a direct or indirect influence on your life.

In August 1914, the First World War unfolded before Europeans as a 'grand adventure' for those involved. Common phrases included 'We're off to the big show', 'It will all be over by Christmas' and the 'war to end all wars'. The only one that would prove to have any validity was the reference to the 'big show', if that is interpreted as total war.

The First World War became a war that killed civilians as freely as it did combatants. Whole communities were obliterated, as technology emerged that enabled mass destruction on a level that had never been previously imagined.

This war changed the world forever. After 400 years of virtual world dominance, Europe virtually self-destructed, and dragged far-flung sections of the British Empire – such as Australia – into the conflict too. From the ashes of destruction, the United States and the Soviet Union would emerge as the world powers to dominate the second half of the twentieth century.

The peace that concluded the war was as ill-advised as the conflict that preceded it. Squabbling over territories, winners blaming losers, selfish parochial interest and a last, fatal attempt by the traditional powers to retain their international control all combined to lead the world into the Second World War a mere generation later.

The First World War was not the 'war to end all wars', but it did change the world.



SOURCE 38 Inspired by the First World War poem 'In Flanders Fields', in which poet John McCrae observed how quickly poppies grew around the graves of those who fell at the Battle of Ypres, the poppy has long been used to commemorate military personnel who have died in war.



FOR THE TEACHER

Check your obook assess for the following additional resources for this chapter:

Answers

Answers to each *Check your learning*, *Understanding and using the sources* and *Profile task* in this chapter

Teacher notes

Useful notes and advice for teaching this chapter, including syllabus connections and relevant weblinks

Class test

Comprehensive test to review students' skills and knowledge

assess quiz

Interactive auto-correcting multiple-choice quiz to test student comprehension