

WORLD: How World War I Started

Europe Goes to War: U.S. Stays Neutral—For Now

Washington, D.C., 1914

War is raging in Europe! Countries are choosing sides. The U.S. is trying to stay **neutral** [not take sides].

The war began when **Serbian**s killed **Austrian Archduke Ferdinand** and his wife. These Serbians wanted to be free of Austrian rule. Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia. Austria-Hungary wants to punish Serbia and make sure Serbians will not revolt.

This war has set off a bigger war because many countries in Europe belong to military alliances. A **military alliance** is an agreement between countries. They agree to help each other if there is a war. The two biggest military alliances in Europe are:

- **The Triple Alliance**—Austria-Hungary, Germany, and Italy.

- **The Triple Entente**—France, England, and Russia.

Because of these alliances, the war between two countries soon became a war covering most of Europe. When Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia, Russia went to help Serbia. Germany quickly took Austria-Hungary's side. France and England were drawn into the war by their alliance with Russia. Only Italy didn't stick by the Triple Alliance to help fight.

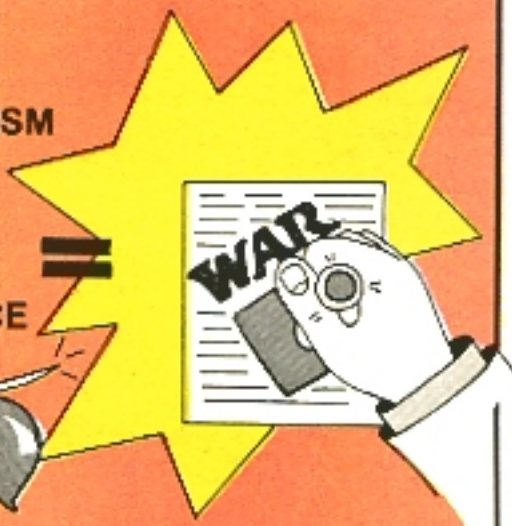
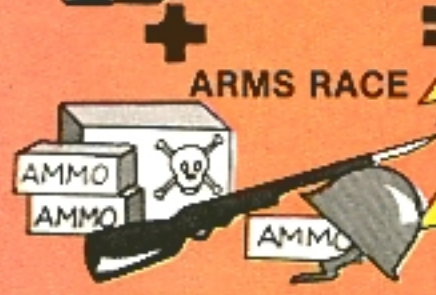
Now that war has started, most of the Triple Alliance countries are called the **Central Powers**. The Triple Entente countries are called the **Allies**.

Besides these alliances, other reasons for the war are:

- **Competition for colonies.** Some countries have colonies and want more. Other countries

WORLD WAR I—How It Happened

A look at the reasons World War I was started. [A world war is a war fought by many countries of the world.]



have no colonies but want some. Both will go to war to win colonies.

- **Nationalism.** People who speak the same language, have the same customs, and live in the same area want their own government, too. They do not want to be ruled by another country. They will go to war to become a coun-

try or to keep the country they have.

- **An arms race.** Countries have been building up big armies. Each country wants to be stronger than its neighbors. They will go to war to prove which is the strongest.

WORLD: World War I

Battle of the Marne: France Stops Germany

The Marne River, France,
September 1914

In the first battle of the war, French and English troops have saved France from the German army. The Allies have stopped the Germans at the Marne River. Ended is Germany's hope for a quick win.

Germany had crossed **Belgium**, a **neutral** country, to get to France quickly. It is against world law for an army to go into a neutral country. For this reason, the French army was

not guarding the border between France and Belgium. Germany was able to attack France at its weak point.

But the Belgians surprised the Germans. It took the Germans 18 days to cross Belgium instead of six days as planned. This gave France and England time to get troops to the Belgian border.

Now German, French, and English troops are digging **trenches** [ditches] from which to fight. The trenches run

from the English Channel to Switzerland.

Between these trenches runs a thin strip of land called "no-man's-land." [A **no-man's-land** is an area lying between enemy armies and controlled by neither side.]

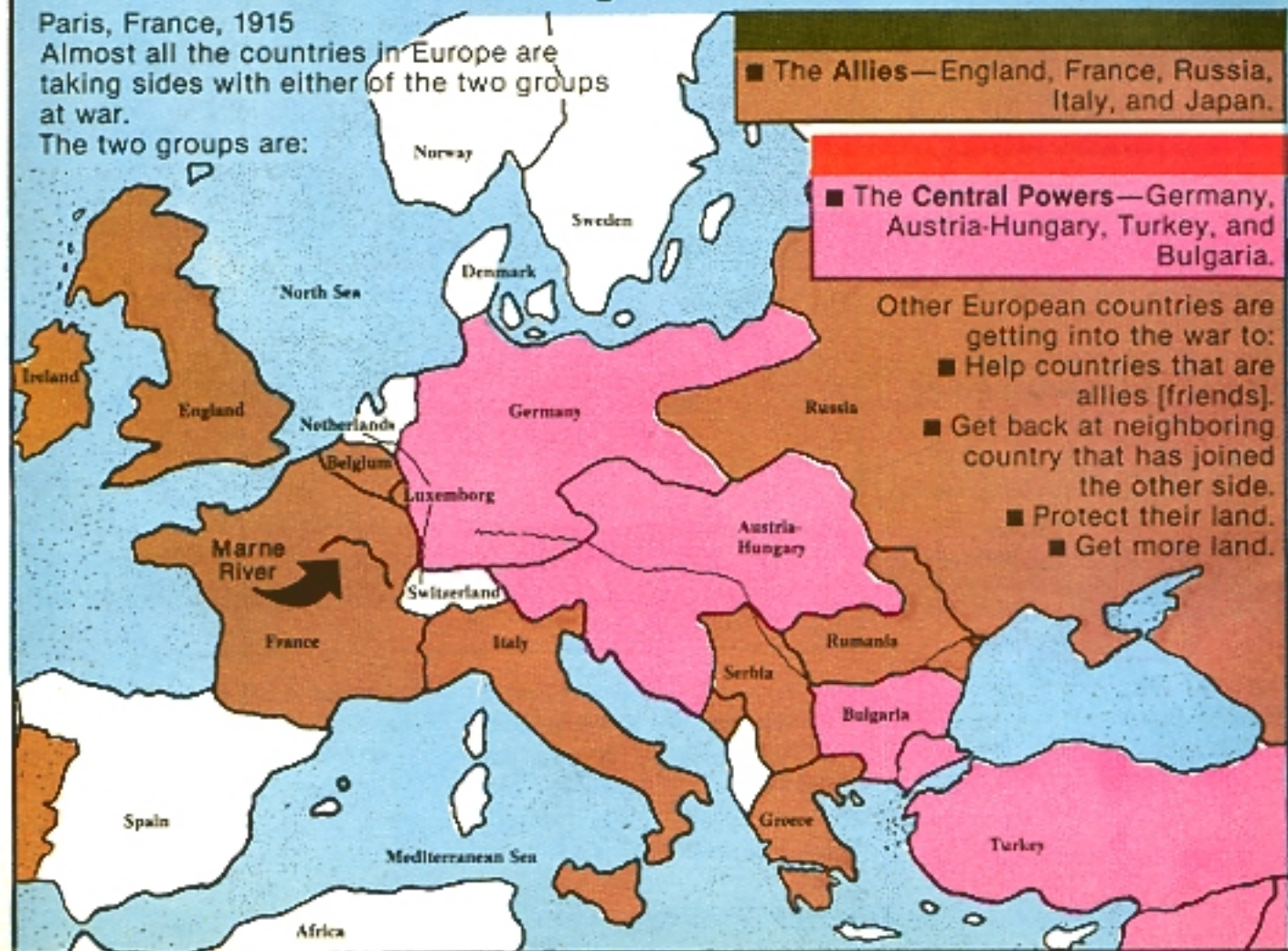
Both the Germans and the Allies hope to take over no-man's-land. But, so far, heavy shooting keeps both sides in their trenches. No one is gaining ground on the Western Front.

WHO—CHOOSING SIDES: The Allies Against the Central Powers

Paris, France, 1915

Almost all the countries in Europe are taking sides with either of the two groups at war.

The two groups are:



WORLD: World War I

PLANS TO WIN THE WAR



WHERE—THE BATTLEFRONTS

Paris, France, 1915

The war is being fought on three fronts. [A **front** is the area where fighting is taking place.] These fronts are:

- **The Western Front**, in France. Germany is attacking France here. The Allies stopped the Germans along this front in the Battle of the Marne. The war here is being fought from trenches. Neither side is gaining ground.



- **The Eastern Front**, in Russia. Germany and Austria-Hungary are fighting Russia. They are winning battles and moving deeper into Russia.

- **The Southern Front**, in Italy and in Greece. Austria-Hungary and Italy are fighting along the border between their two countries. The British and French are fighting Turkey. They are trying to cut off Turkey from the other Central Powers. They want to keep Turkey from helping the other Central Powers.

WORLD: World War I



Lusitania Sinks: How It Happened

WHAT: German submarine sinks the Lusitania, an English passenger ship.

WHEN: May 7, 1915

IMPORTANCE: Americans were on board the ship and died.

Can the U.S. continue to stay out of World War I?

THE WAR—THE WEAPONS

New weapons are changing the way war is fought. This is the first war where

good fighting machines are more important than good fighting men.

Airplane—Aircraft that can carry a pilot and a machine gun. Some carry bombs.

First Used: 1914

Used By: Allies and Central Powers

What It Does: Lets a pilot see where the enemy has its troops. Airplanes also shoot down enemy airplanes and soldiers on the ground, and bomb supplies.

Tank—A large truck covered with heavy metal.

First Used: 1916

Used By: Allies

What It Does: Runs over trenches and cannot be stopped by machine guns.

Poison Gas—Kills or hurts people by poisoning the air they breathe.

First Used: 1915

Used By: Allies and Central Powers.

Submarine [U-boat]—A ship that moves under water.

First Used: 1914

Used By: Germany (mostly)

What It Does: Fires torpedoes [underwater bombs] and sinks ships without being seen.

Machine gun—A gun that fires a very fast stream of bullets and can keep firing for a long time.

First Used: 1860s in the U.S.

Used By: Allies and Central Powers

What It Does: One machine gun can kill soldiers by the hundreds in a few minutes. A whole line of attacking soldiers can be shot down quickly with machine guns.

Germans Sink Lusitania— Americans Killed

Washington, D.C.,

May 7, 1915

The war in Europe has touched America. Over 1,000 people, including 128 Americans, died today when a German submarine sank the **Lusitania**. The Lusitania was an English passenger ship.

German submarines are sinking more than war ships.

Germany is sinking:

■ Merchant ships and passenger ships.

■ Ships belonging to neutral countries.

U.S. ships in the seas around the British Isles are not safe. Some Americans are saying it is time to fight.

President Woodrow Wilson wants America to stay out of the war. Most other Americans want to stay neutral. They want the U.S. to keep trading with both sides. But Germany's submarine warfare is making Americans side with the Allies—the English, French, and Russians.