Helping your children choose books they will love

I reading

Lovereading4kids.co.uk is a book website created for parents and children to make choosing books easy and fun

Opening extract from

The National Archives: World War 1 Unclassified

Written by

Nick Hunter

Published by

A&C Black an imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing PLC

All Text is Copyright © of the Author and/or Illustrator

Please print off and read at your leisure.

Lovereading4kids.co.uk





Published 2014 by A & C Black,
an imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc,
50 Bedford Square
London, WC1B 3DP

www.bloomsbury.com

Bloomsbury is a registered trademark of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc

Copyright © 2014 A & C Black, Bloomsbury Publishing
Text copyright © 2014 Nick Hunter
The National Archives logo device is a trademark of
The National Archives and is used under licence.

The right of Nick Hunter to be identified as the author of this work has been asserted by him in accordance with the Copyrights, Designs and Patents Act, 1988.

Design by Nick Avery Design

ISBN: 978-1-4729-0525-3

A CIP catalogue for this book is available from the British Library.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form or by any means – graphic, electronic, or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, taping or information storage and retrieval systems – without the prior permission in writing of the publishers.

This book is produced using paper that is made from wood grown in managed, sustainable forests. It is natural, renewable and recyclable. The logging and manufacturing processes conform to the environmental regulations of the country of origin.

Printed in China by Toppan Excel

1 3 5 7 9 10 8 6 4 2





Terror in the trenches

At 07.30 a.m. on 1 July 1916, in the misty valley of the River Somme in northern France, the deafening artillery bombardment paused. Whistles signalled that the time had come. The first wave of 66,000 men left their trenches and marched steadily across no man's land. Some of the soldiers even kicked a football between them as they advanced. They were confident. Surely the enemy could not have survived nearly three million shells that had rained down on them for six days and six nights.



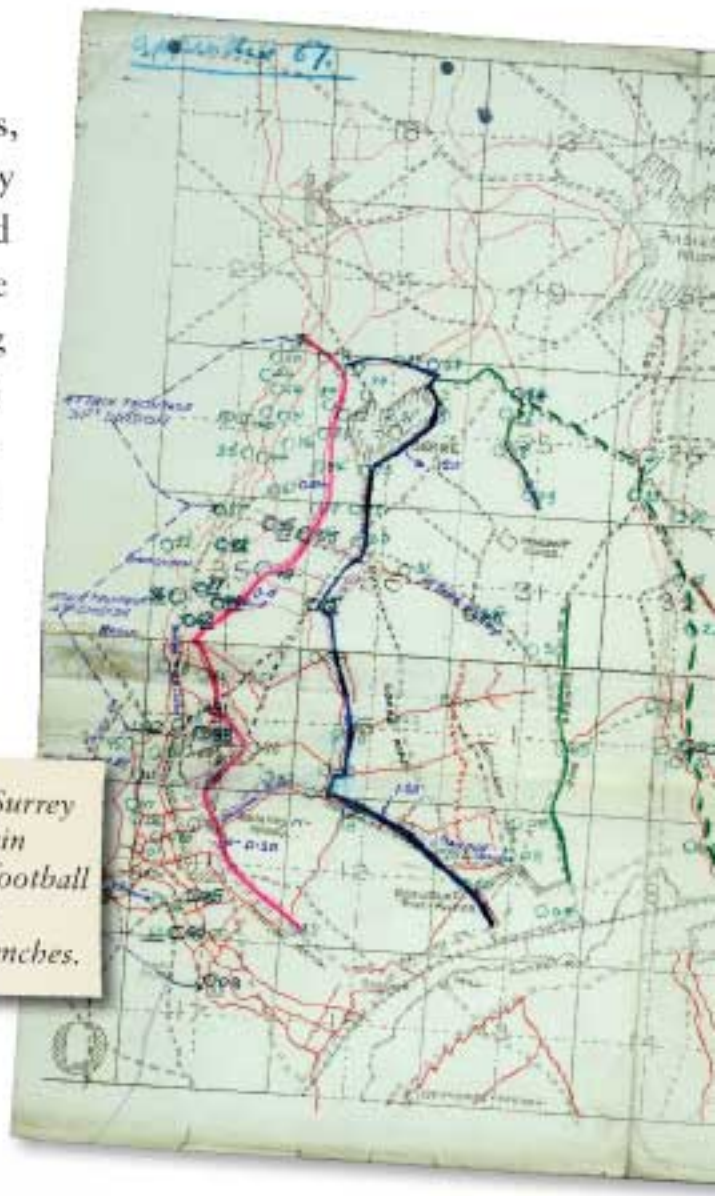
▲ *As soon as the troops left their trenches, they were exposed to the full force of the enemy's weapons.*

False hopes

As the infantry approached the German trenches, the real situation became clear. The artillery attack had not cleared the dense coils of barbed wire protecting the trenches. German machine guns that had remained underground during the terrible bombardment opened fire. The advancing troops had no protection from these deadly weapons. Dead and injured soldiers fell into the mud in their thousands.



◀ *Soldiers of the East Surrey Regiment, led by Captain Wilfred Nevill, played football as they moved steadily towards the German trenches.*



This was the first day of the Battle of the Somme. In the following days the scale of the disaster became clear. Of 100,000 men who had advanced on that day, 20,000 had been killed and 40,000 injured. More British lives were lost in battle than on any day before or since.

The Battle of the Somme raged until November 1916 and claimed hundreds of thousands more lives on both sides. It has come to symbolize the horrors of World War I, but it was just one day of a conflict that changed the world forever. This book uses incredible archive material to discover the secrets of this terrible war, and to tell the story of those who fought it.



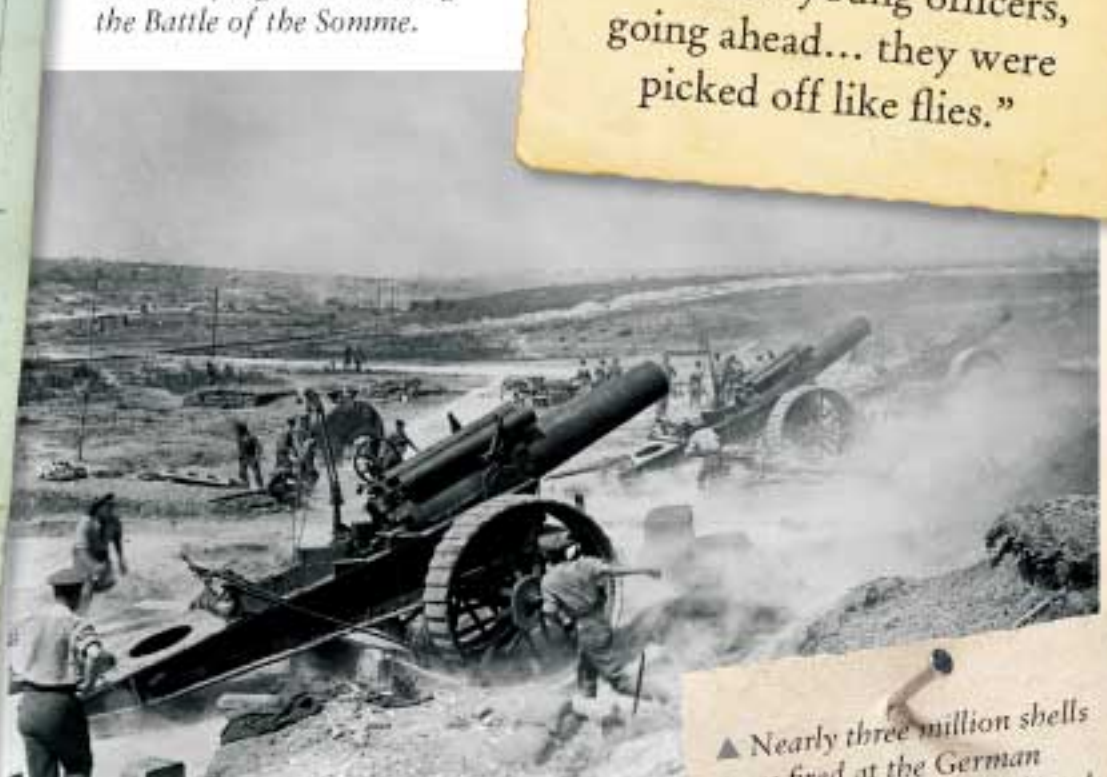
▲ *Millions of kilometres of razor-sharp barbed wire stopped attackers reaching the enemy trenches in World War I.*

A soldier's letter home about the first day of Somme

"The officers were urging us on... But you just couldn't. It was hopeless. And these young officers, going ahead... they were picked off like flies."



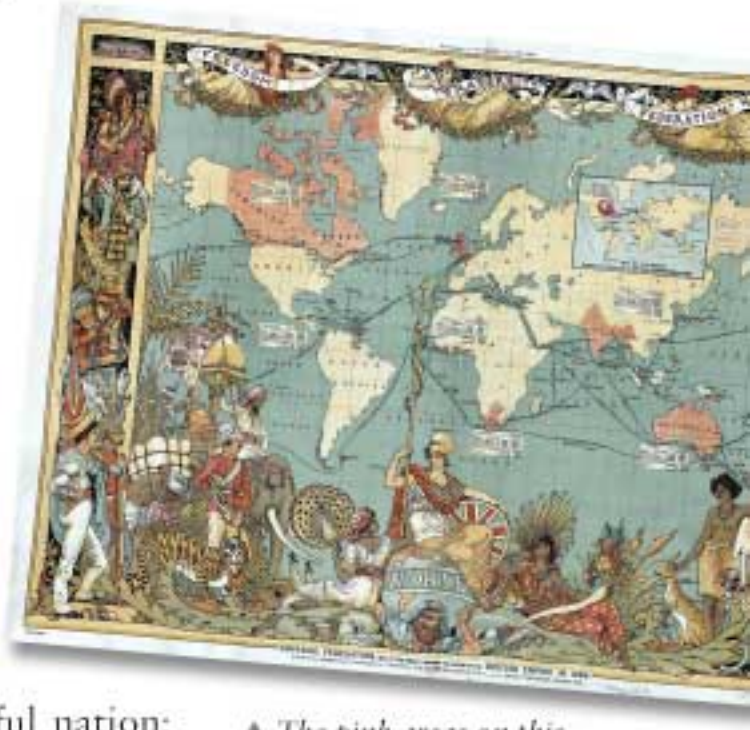
◀ *This map shows the land, criss-crossed with trenches, that was fought over during the Battle of the Somme.*



▲ *Nearly three million shells were fired at the German defences in the days before the advance of 1 July 1916.*

EUROPE DIVIDED

World War I lasted from the summer of 1914 until November 1918, but the story of World War I began long before the first shots were fired. It was an explosion of tensions and rivalries that had been building up in Europe for many decades.



▲ *The pink areas on this map show the size of the British Empire in the years before 1914.*

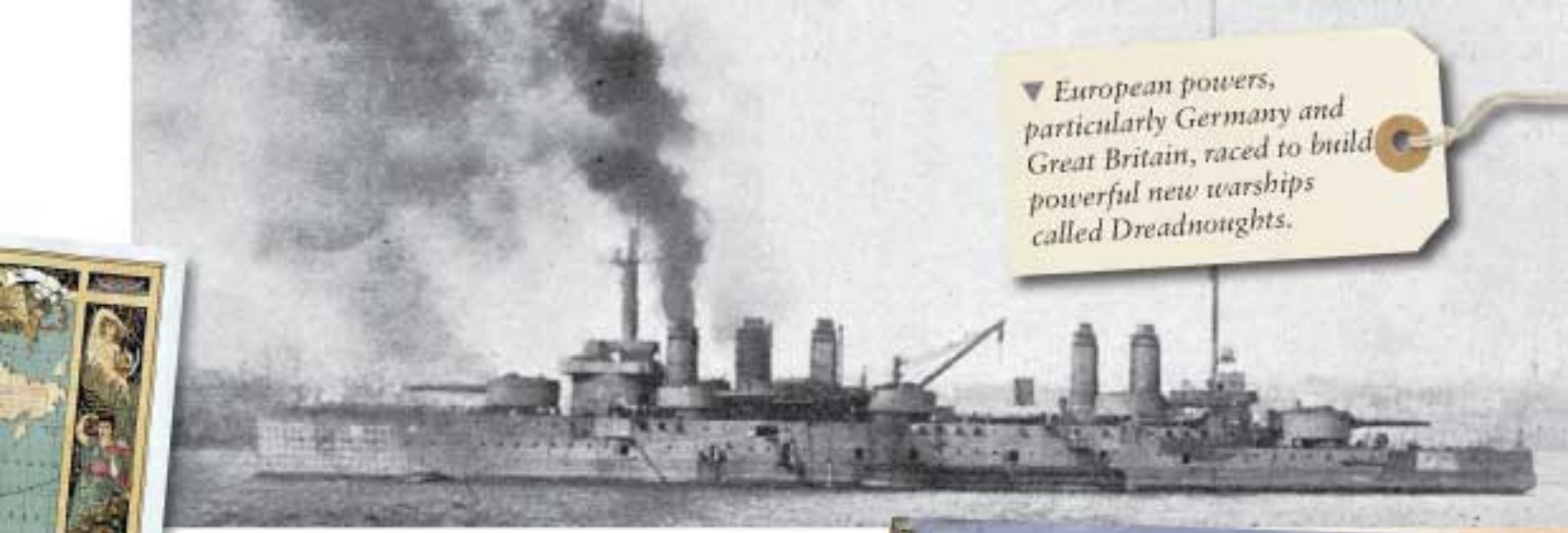
Europe's most powerful nations, including France, Russia, and Great Britain, had long been rivals for influence in the world. In 1871, they were joined by a new and powerful nation: Germany. Prussia and a collection of smaller German states had united as a single country after a war against France in 1870-71.

Taking sides

The new power in Europe worried other nations, but Germany did not feel secure. France wanted revenge after Germany had seized the states of Alsace and Lorraine. Germany's leaders were worried about being encircled by France and Russia. These Great Powers started making deals and alliances to protect themselves. By 1914, Europe was divided, with Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy on one side, and the Triple Entente of Britain, France and Russia on the other.

▼ *Uniforms and weapons of war were very different in 1914 than they had been during the Franco-Prussian War.*





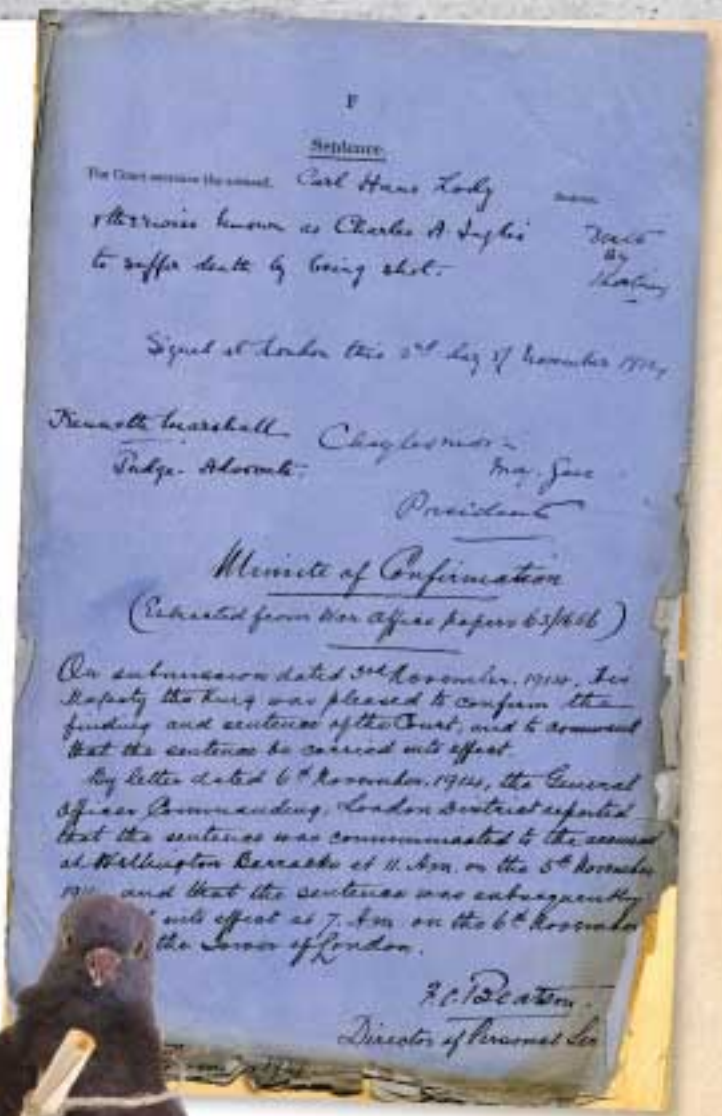
▼ *European powers, particularly Germany and Great Britain, raced to build powerful new warships called Dreadnoughts.*



European nations had used their power to conquer other lands and build empires around the world. The largest of these was the British Empire, but France, Germany and others set up colonies in Africa and elsewhere. In southeastern Europe, the Turkish Ottoman Empire was falling apart as nations such as Serbia fought to become independent. Russia and Austria-Hungary were each trying to get more influence over the Balkan region and these new nations.

Talking tough

As the tension mounted, nations were desperate to show they were tougher than the rest. Germany and Britain competed to build the most powerful warships, called Dreadnoughts. In Britain, novels and newspapers warned that German spies were everywhere, planning for invasion. However, only ten suspected spies were actually arrested between 1911 and July 1914.



F

Sentence

The Court sentence the accused Carl Hans Lody

otherwise known as Charles A. Inglis

to suffer death by being shot.

Signed at London this 3rd day of November 1914

Kenneth Marshall
Judge-Advocate

Charles Mason
Maj. Gen.
President

Minute of Confirmation

(Extracted from War Office papers 63/1656)

On submission dated 3rd November, 1914, His Majesty the King was pleased to confirm the finding and sentence of the Court, and to command that the sentence be carried into effect.

By letter dated 6th November, 1914, the General Officer Commanding, London District reported that the sentence was communicated to the accused at Wellington Barracks at 11 A.m. on the 5th November 1914 and that the sentence was subsequently [illegible] into effect at 7 A.m. on the 6th November [illegible] the Tower of London.

F. C. Beatson
Director of Personal Sec

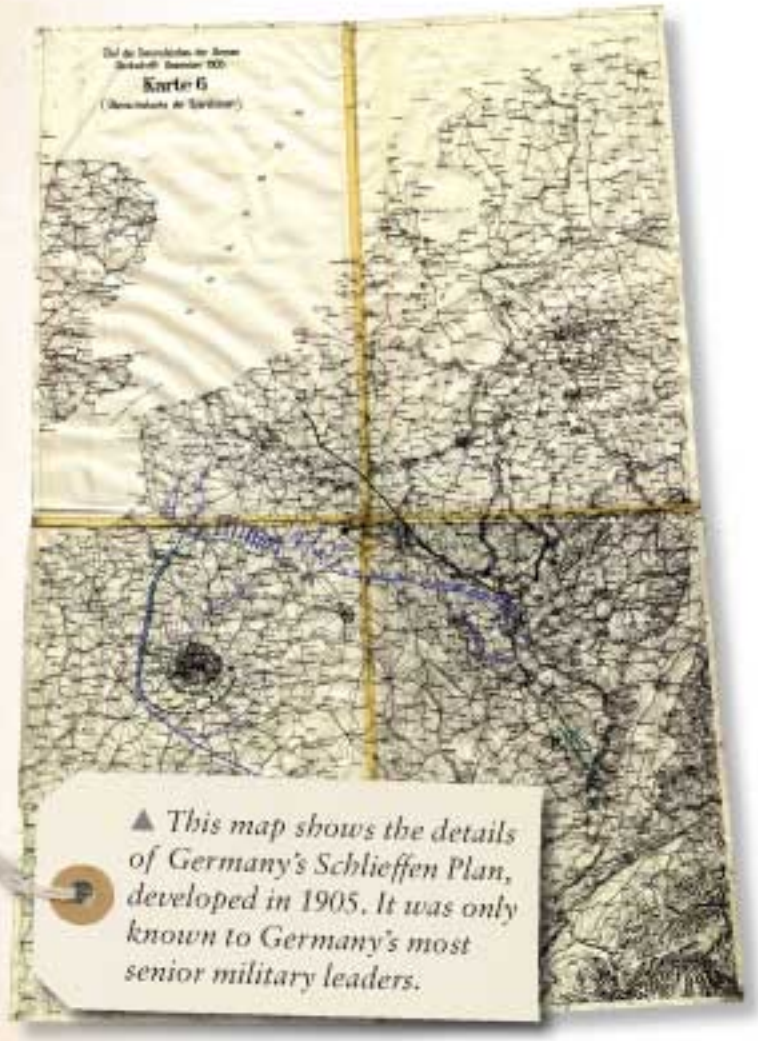
▲ *This is the death sentence passed on Carl Hans Lody, a German spy who used the name Charles Inglis. Lody was shot at the Tower of London on 6 November 1914.*



► *Many homing pigeons were shot to stop them passing messages to the enemy. This was strictly forbidden once war broke out as governments needed pigeons to pass secret messages.*

THE ROAD TO WAR

Fierce rivalries and edgy alliances meant there was a danger that a tiny dispute could spark a crisis that would quickly spiral out of control. Each country had war plans detailing how they would fight a war, but one plan in particular made a wider European war more likely.



▲ *This map shows the details of Germany's Schlieffen Plan, developed in 1905. It was only known to Germany's most senior military leaders.*

The Schlieffen Plan

Germany knew that they would probably have to fight against France and Russia, to the west and east. Their plan, called the Schlieffen Plan after the general who devised it, was to invade France through Belgium and deliver a knockout blow within a few weeks. Once France was defeated, they could turn their attention to the vast armies of Russia in the east. If this plan was put into action, Europe would be at war.

Shot in Sarajevo

The first shot of World War I was fired in the Bosnian city of Sarajevo by a Serbian nationalist called Gavrilo Princip. Princip's assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the heir to Austria-Hungary's throne, on 28 June 1914 was an outrage that Austria-Hungary could not ignore.



▲ *After shooting Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife, Gavrilo Princip was arrested. Investigators were able to link the plot to the Serbian government.*

The shot set off a dramatic chain of events as Austria-Hungary blamed Serbia:

23 July: Austria-Hungary sends an ultimatum to Serbia making demands that they knew the Serbs would never accept.

28 July: After Serbia refuses to accept its demands, Austria-Hungary declares war on Serbia, with support from Germany.

30 July: Russia mobilises its huge army in support of Serbia.

1 August: Germany declares war on Russia. Germany's war plan means that its first attack will be against Russia's ally France through neutral Belgium.

3 August: Germany invades Belgium, Luxembourg and France.

4 August: Great Britain declares war on Germany because of its invasion of Belgium.

▼ *The Russian army could call on millions of men, but they lagged behind their opponents in the quality of their equipment and leadership.*



▲ *On 29 July, Tsar Nicholas II of Russia exchanged telegrams with his cousin Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany in a desperate attempt to halt the slide to war. The Russian royal family would not live to see the end of the conflict.*

British Colonel **Alfred Knox** sent this dispatch detailing the mobilisation of Russian forces. He stated that preparations began on 24 August, the day after Austria-Hungary's ultimatum to Serbia.

"The number of men called up is causing general astonishment. Russians speak of an army of 8 million, but admit it will require 6 months to equip."

