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The Story of World War One

Written by

Richard Brassey

Published by

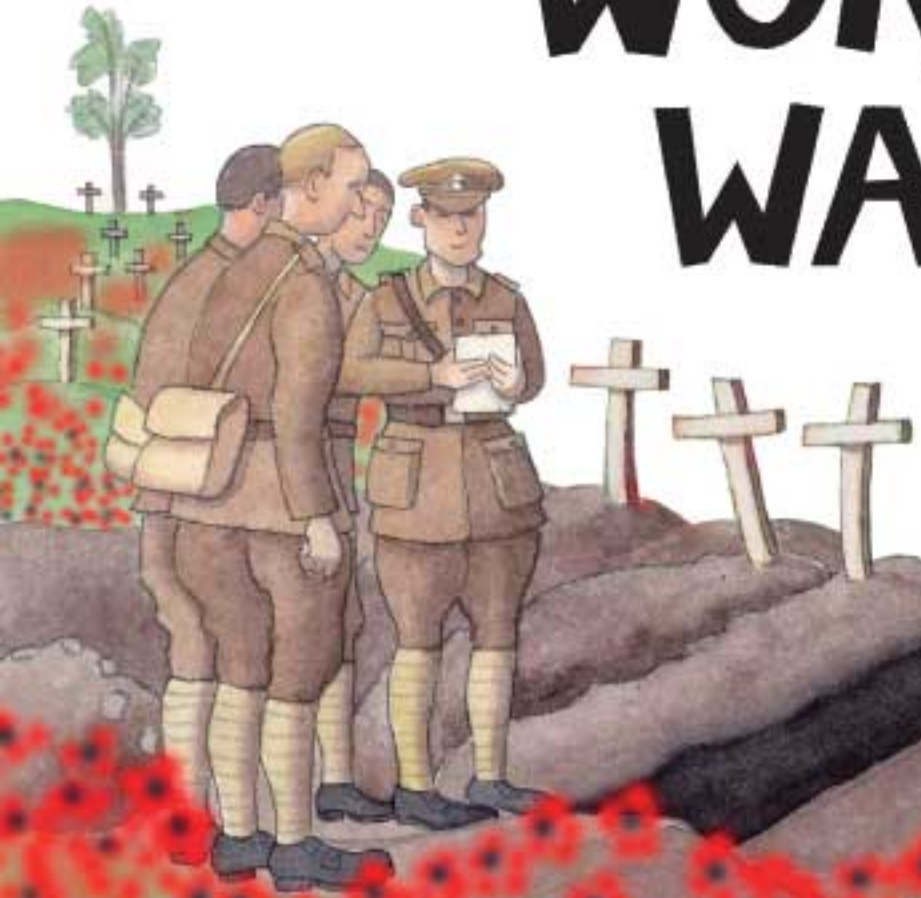
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THE STORY OF WORLD WAR ONE



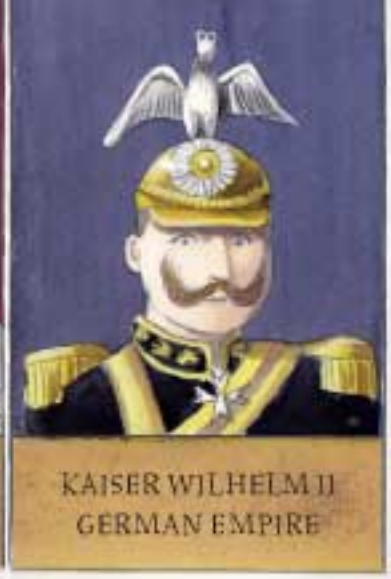


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Before World War One Europe was dominated by six empires, all headed by an emperor or a king, except for France which had an elected president.

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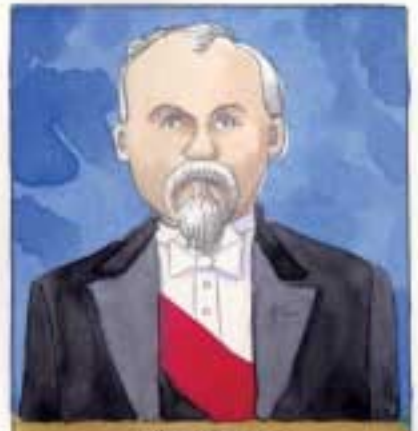
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THE SHOT HEARD ROUND THE WORLD

On 28th June 1914 a man named Gavrilo Princip shot dead Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the heir to the Austrian emperor, and his wife Sophie in the city of Sarajevo. This is often seen as the event which started World War One. Nobody then had any idea the war would last for four years and be one of the most terrible in history.



THE DOMINO EFFECT

Gavrilo Princip was a Serb who wanted all the Balkan states to be free from the Austrian Empire. Many Serbs felt the same way, so Austria blamed them for the Archduke's murder and declared war on Serbia. Unfortunately this set off a domino effect with all the empires declaring war on each other.



Russia was allied to Serbia and so immediately came to Serbia's aid against Austria . . .

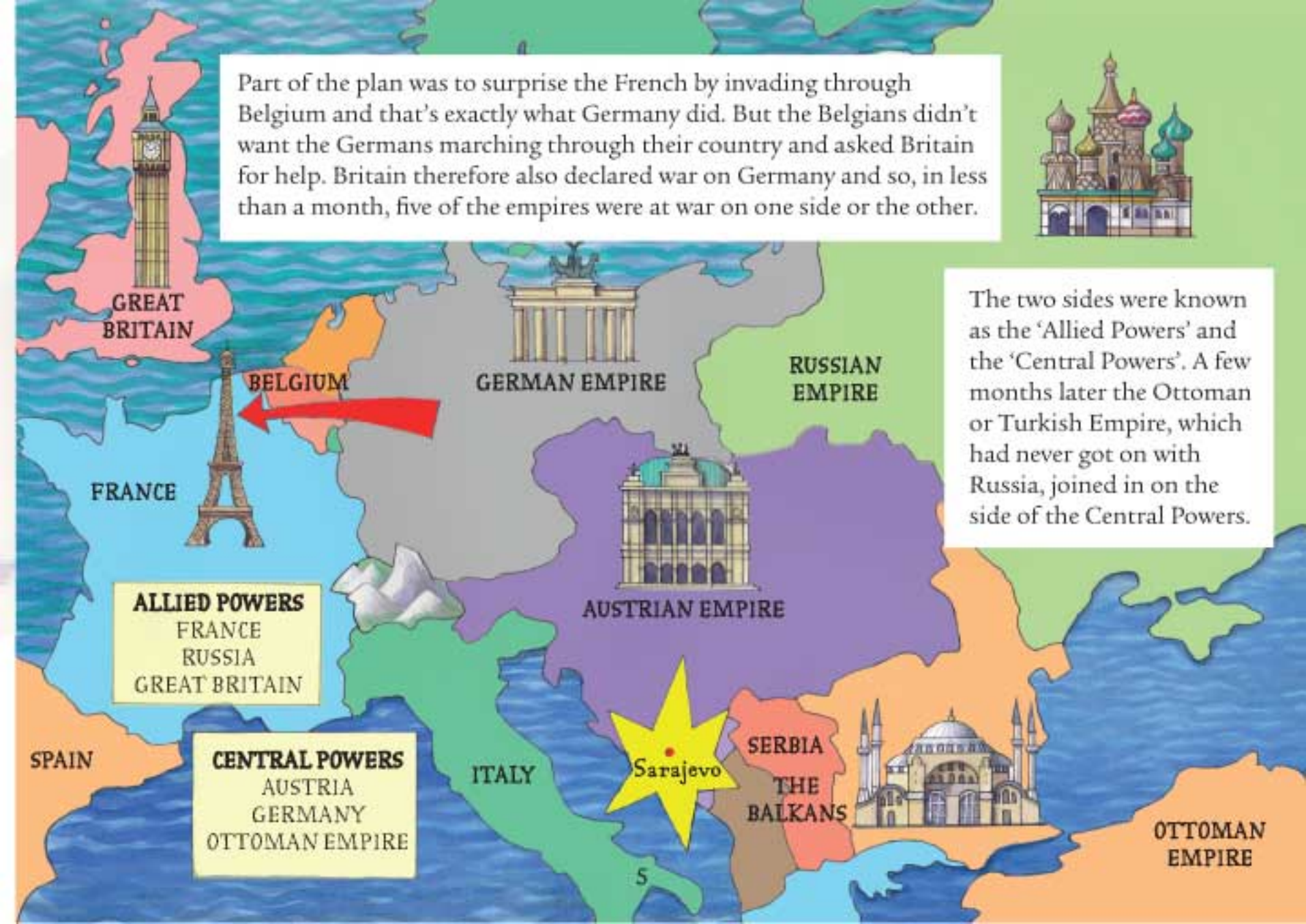


. . . while Germany was Austria's ally and so joined Austria against Russia . . . And Germany had a plan.

GERMANY'S PLAN



For centuries the Germans had felt sandwiched between two old rivals who, they feared, would gang up on them – Russia to the east and France to the west. So they had a plan ready: if they ever got into a war with either one, they'd quickly invade France, who they thought would be easy to beat . . . then concentrate on Russia, who they believed would take longer to get ready for war but ultimately be harder to defeat.


Part of the plan was to surprise the French by invading through Belgium and that's exactly what Germany did. But the Belgians didn't want the Germans marching through their country and asked Britain for help. Britain therefore also declared war on Germany and so, in less than a month, five of the empires were at war on one side or the other.
The two sides were known as the 'Allied Powers' and the 'Central Powers'. A few months later the Ottoman or Turkish Empire, which had never got on with Russia, joined in on the side of the Central Powers.
GREAT BRITAIN
BELGIUM
GERMAN EMPIRE
RUSSIAN EMPIRE
FRANCE
AUSTRIAN EMPIRE
ALLIED POWERS
FRANCE
RUSSIA
GREAT BRITAIN
CENTRAL POWERS
AUSTRIA
GERMANY
OTTOMAN EMPIRE
SPAIN
ITALY
Sarajevo
SERBIA
THE BALKANS
OTTOMAN EMPIRE





Crowds gathered in Europe's capitals strangely excited by the idea of war. Huge numbers of men volunteered to fight. Hundreds of thousands of horses were also 'recruited'. Horses had always been used in war for transport and cavalry, but when the French army used Paris motor taxi cabs to rush troops to the Front, it began to dawn on people that machines might soon take their place.

