

War:1914

The assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand, **28th June 1914**. Franz Ferdinand went to annexed territory, Bosnia Herzegovina on Serbia's national day. As Serbia and Bosnia were both Slavic nations and Serbia wanted to bring Bosnia into a greater Serbia, Serbia were insulted by the heir to the Austria-Hungarian throne parading up Slav nations on that particular day. A group of Serbian nationalists (the Black Hand) assassinated the Archduke and his wife, Sophie.

On the **5th July** the Kaiser gave the 'blank cheque' to Austria-Hungary which was unconditional support to go to war. Austria-Hungary probably wouldn't have risked a war with both Russia and Serbia without this support.

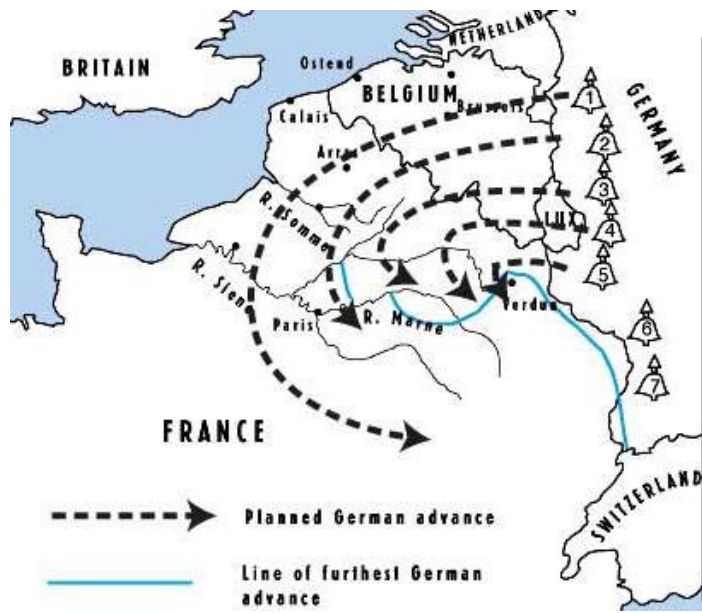
29th July Russian army prepares to help Serbia defend itself against the Austrian attack. They mobilise, but they do not declare war. Germany issued an ultimatum to Russia to stop mobilisation. France begin mobilisation for the **1st August**.

1st August: Germany declares war on Russia but moves its troops towards France and Belgium- putting the Schlieffen Plan into place.

3rd August: Germany declares war on France and invades Belgium; Britain orders Germany to withdraw from Belgium. This was because of a long standing treaty agreeing Belgian neutrality that Germany did not expect Britain to honour, they called it the 'scrap of paper'.

4th August- Britain declares war on Germany.

6th August- Austria-Hungary declares war on Russia.



The Schlieffen Plan
This was created in 1905, as a response to the signing of the Entente Cordiale. Because Britain and France were getting closer, and France and Russia were already close, Germany were scared of potentially fighting a war on two fronts. The Schlieffen Plan addressed this by:

- Rather than invading France through its heavily defended border, they would invade through Belgium and Luxemburg.
- Having gone through those neutral countries with little resistance, they would then take Paris within six weeks.
- Having conquered France, they would turn round and move their troops to fight Russia, who by that time, would have moved their troops toward Germany.

Which country is to blame for WWI?

Britain

Britain did not make clear to Germany that Britain would intervene on the side of France and Russia unless Austria-Hungary was held back. Most German politicians did not believe that Britain would involve herself in a war. However, Britain had a moral obligation to support the Triple Entente and the Kaiser knew that Britain had a treaty to support Belgium when he declared war on France.



Russia

Russia's defence of Serbia against Austria-Hungary did make the assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand into a bigger crisis as Serbia felt able to take on Austria-Hungary. However, Austria-Hungary might have taken over more of the Balkans and this could have led to war anyway. Also, Russia did order mobilisation first, encouraging other European powers to make similar moves.



Germany

Germany's blank cheque to Austria-Hungary without knowing what its rulers intended to do. This gave Austria-Hungary the confidence to apply extensive pressure to Serbia, knowing that they would get Germany into the war. Germany also declared war on Russia and France and invaded Belgium and had already planned for this war with the Schlieffen Plan.



Austria-Hungary

Austria-Hungary intended to go to war with Serbia and that was clear from the ultimatum that was just there to be rejected. They also bombed Belgrade leading to Russia's mobilisation and even though Germany recommended using that as a negotiation point, they brought Russia and Germany into the war with Serbia. A reaction to the assassination of the Archduke was justified but that was over the top.



Serbia was aware of the plot against the Archduke and did not try to stop it. They refused to accept all demands in Austria-Hungary's ultimatum.

France didn't try to restrain Russia, or to appeal to Germany and Austria-Hungary. They also didn't warn Germany of Britain's intention to support France in a future war.