



WEIRD WAR I

PLAYER'S GUIDE



WEIRD WAR ONE

Player's Guide

By James Cambias and Teller
Additional Material by Shane Lacy Hensley

Edited by Matthew Cutter & Shane Hensley

Proofing: Preston DuBose, Thomas Shook

Art Direction, Graphic Design, and Layout:
Aaron Acevedo, Thomas Shook, Matthew Cutter

Cover Illustration: Tomek Tworek

Interior Illustrations: Aaron Acevedo, Alida Saxon, Bien Flores, Bruno Balixa,
Carly Sorge, James Denton, Jordan Peacock, Manfred Rohrer, Martin de Diego Sádaba,
Mike Wolmarans, Romana Kendelic, Stephen Wood, Tomek Tworek

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Chapter One: Characters

“The Great War differed from all ancient wars in the immense power of the combatants and their fearful agencies of destruction, and from all modern wars in the utter ruthlessness with which it was fought.”

—Winston Churchill,
First Lord of the Admiralty

In 1913 *The Great Illusion*, by Norman Angell, argued that war was futile due to the economic interdependence of the great powers of Europe. The book was heralded as proof of the pinnacle of development achieved by the western world and its civilizing power. Yet, less than a year later, the fields of eastern and western Europe were soaking up oceans of blood as the largest war in recorded history flared across the continent, eventually spreading across the globe.

To those attuned to the darkness, shadowy figures could be discerned moving behind the scenes in the great capitals. The instruments of industry that provided the technological marvels of the new age were just as easily turned to destruction in lands that had seen millennia of death and bloodshed from war after war. As the dogs of war howl across the blasted landscape, vile things arise from forgotten forests, bogs, and subterranean spaces already ancient when the Romans built their cities atop them.

Soldiers from a host of countries fight against each other across No Man’s Land, but all are united in their struggle against the darkness that creeps across the battlefield, seeking strength from the terror, violence and death. Few know the truth behind the wild stories told in harsh whispers by shell-shocked veterans, and even fewer know how to combat this ancient evil.

The time is 1914. The place is the battlefield of the Great War. You’re here for the duration, until your life or mind are destroyed, or until this deadly struggle with the mud, disease, and the enemy finally ends in the paneled halls of some national capital far from the fighting.

Good luck, trooper—you’ll need it!

I Want You

The world has exploded into war, and the combatants have discovered that their professional standing armies aren’t enough to end it quickly. Every country begins a massive call-up, either by mobilization, conscription, or an intense recruiting campaign. You’ve joined up or got an official notice in the post, and now you’re fighting for the King, the Kaiser, the Emperor, or La Patrie. You’re in the Army now.

Unit Organization

The difference between an army and a mob is organization. An army has a chain of command. One man at the top—like General Haig, Marshal Joffre, or General Ludendorff—plans the operations. He gives orders to the generals commanding corps and divisions. They give orders to colonels commanding regiments. Colonels give orders to majors, majors to captains, captains to lieutenants, lieutenants to sergeants, and sergeants to the privates who go out and actually do the job.

Unlike other adventuring teams, a military unit in *Weird Wars* has a commander. At least one player needs to take the Rank Edge, though he may be an Officer or a Non-Commissioned Officer. For those unfamiliar with military life, officers are supposed to plan and organize operations, while non-commissioned officers (sergeants) figure out

how to accomplish the officers' plans. The rest are enlisted men, who do the fighting and dying.

Officers come from Europe's educated classes, and may be skilled professionals or twits in fancy uniforms. Sergeants and soldiers are from the working class, and get their rank through experience and ability. In the Great War, soldiers in just about every army have a dim view of their officers. At best they're idealistic fools trying to get everyone killed. At worst they're martinets staying safe behind the lines while sacrificing whole divisions for miniscule gains.

The soldier's view of his sergeant is more mixed. He's the one who harps on keeping his men's kit clean, and yells at them or even gives them a beating for mistakes. On the other hand, he knows what he's doing and wants to keep his soldiers alive, and he's out in the mud with everyone else, sharing danger and hardship.

Chaos in the trenches at the
Battle of the Somme, 1916.

Command

In real World War I armies the lowest level officers and NCOs command platoons of about 20–50 men rather than squads, and even the smallest tactical movements involved whole companies or battalions.

In a *Weird War I* game, storytelling and drama trumps realism. Officer characters go out with the squad on its missions. This is justifiable once the team starts getting special assignments which require an officer's presence. The squad can also be the officer's "headquarters" squad assigned as his scouts, messengers, aides, and staff.

Extras

The officer, NCOs, and some of the troops are player characters. The rest of the grunts are Extras. Though the officers are in command of the unit, when combat erupts, control of the Extras should still be shared by all the players as usual. Extras also make a useful pool of replacement characters. If a player character dies, the player can take one of the Extras as a new character.



WHICH SIDE?

“When all was over, torture and cannibalism were the only two expedients that the civilized, scientific, Christian states had been able to deny themselves: and these were of doubtful utility.”

—Winston Churchill

World War I has no villains. The Kaiser's army are not the Nazis. Both sides are fighting for honorable reasons, and both sides got their hands very dirty. Player characters can be from any of the warring great powers. Some adventures may even involve teams of heroes assembled from both sides, banding together in neutral territory against some common threat.

Typical Squads

Obviously, the exact makeup of the party depends on where they are and what they're doing. A group on the Western Front has a full infantry squad, while spies or irregular soldiers in the colonies may be more like a traditional band of adventurers. Here are some examples:

- **Infantry Squad:** One officer, one NCO, three to ten privates. In the Allied armies squads are single-purpose units: rifle squads, machine-gun squads, rifle grenadiers, and so on, all armed with the same equipment. The German Army pioneers mixed squads with one heavy-weapon team and a group of riflemen, so that every German squad has a machine gun, mortar, or flamethrower. Note that after 1914 very few squads (except for American units) are at full strength. Half strength or smaller is the norm. The squad is part of a platoon of 20 to 50 men, which may sometimes be placed under the officer's command as well. A full-strength platoon usually has four squads. Allied platoons have two rifle squads, a machine-gun section, and a squad of rifle grenadiers or flamethrowers. German platoons employ four mixed squads.
- **Tank Crew:** One commander (officer), two or more enlisted men (any one of which can be an NCO), who man the engines, guns, and steering. In the German Army, the tank gunners are from the artillery, the driver and mechanics are engineers, and the commander is likely an infantry officer. As one might expect, this makes German tankers terribly inefficient. British and French tanks have a less complicated command structure. In battle each tank is supported by (and supports) up to a platoon of infantry.

- **Colonial Militia:** Half patrol of one officer, often two NCOs, and up to 20 other men. If the troops are native Africans, Arabs, or Indians, then the NCOs can be either native or European. Troops can also be white “settler” militia, in which case the officers are either local whites or Europeans. The simple rule is that non-Europeans never have command of white-skinned troops. Racism is in full effect at this time in history.

Your Character

Creating a character for *Savage Worlds: Weird War I* follows the steps below.

1. Race

Everyone is human, and therefore all characters get a free Edge during character creation.

2. Nationality

Choose nationality. You can be from any of the combatant nations, their colonies, or even play a soldier of fortune from a neutral country. The War Master should make sure all the player characters are on the same side in the war. Be sure to check out the National Identity Edge described below.

3. Choose Service and Branch

Decide what your character's service and branch specialization are. The War Master may want everyone to be part of the same service for the sake of convenience. Although the focus of *Weird War I* is land warfare in Europe and the colonies, characters from another service might wind up getting assigned to a specialist squad, subject to the War Master's approval.

4. Attributes

Define your hero's attributes as normal. Some military specialties may require minimum starting attribute levels. There is also a new attribute: Sanity.

Sanity: Those who face the mind-blasting horrors of war sometimes slip over the edge into madness. Sanity is a derived Trait that tracks your character's mental health and stability. A soldier's starting Sanity is 2 plus half his Spirit die type unless modified by Edges and Hindrances. As a character faces the horror of war and other weirdness his Sanity may fluctuate. If a character increases his Spirit after character generation, it also increases his current Sanity by one point.

Sanity can also go down, of course. This may eventually lead to shell-shock, a medical discharge or worse. The **Setting Rules** chapter has more information on Sanity on page 35.

5. Skills

In *Weird War I*, starting characters get 15 points for skills as usual. However, you must take certain skills determined by your service branch and job specialty. This ensures characters are suited to their roles within the military.

Branch Training: Once you've chosen your service branch, take any skills required and pay points for them as usual.

Spend Extra Points: Leftover skill points may be spent as usual, and often reflect the character's life prior to armed service.

6. Edges and Hindrances

All starting characters begin play with one free Edge of the player's choice. Some Edges go particularly well with a given service specialization. These are listed as "Useful Edges," but you don't have to take them. You may take one Major Hindrance (worth 2 points) and two Minor Hindrances (worth 1 point each). Hindrances can't be anything that would get the soldier rejected by the draft board, such as Blind, Elderly, One Arm, One Leg, or Young.

Points gained from Hindrances may be used as follows.

For 2 Hindrance points you can:

- Raise an attribute one die type.
- Choose an Edge.

For 1 Hindrance point you can:

- Gain another skill point.

7. Rank

All soldiers have a rank or rating. Military characters without the Rank (NCO) or Rank (Officer) Edge are automatically enlisted men, and consequently can't have a rank higher than E-4. See the Rank Tables in Chapters Four and Five for the ranks in each army and service branch. If the squad has two officers of the same rank, the two players must decide which of them is "senior" and thus in command. A difference of even a day in the date of an officer's commission can make all the difference.

8. Gear

The basic gear issue varies somewhat from country to country, but unless the War Master says otherwise, your character gets his uniform

(made of heavy wool), a bedroll, mess kit, ammo pouches, and basic weapon (see page 17). Any additional equipment issued by your service branch is listed in its description on the following pages, including typical ammunition loadouts.

Characters have \$50 worth of personal gear or cash as well, but all items must be small enough to fit into their standard pack.

9. Background

Come up with a history for your character. What's his personality like? Where is he from? What did he do before the war began? Was he drafted or did he volunteer? The answers to these questions will help you choose your service branch and occupation.

Race and Sex

The Great War is a man's war. Women serve as nurses, spies, and take over clerical jobs in the military bureaucracy, but no army even considers using women in combat. This is not to say that women don't wind up in battle anyway. Nurses often serve in field hospitals close to the front, and



during battles may find themselves in the middle of things.

Players who want to run female characters should come up with a reason that would convince the military leaders of 1914 to overcome their Victorian chivalry and/or sexism. Arcane Edges or special knowledge of the paranormal might suffice.

In one-shot or limited scenarios, female civilians can get caught up in *Weird War* events by happenstance. During the opening battles, civilians of both sexes are overrun by the advancing armies, and female passengers on ocean liners can suddenly find themselves in the middle of a naval battle.

The war is not, however, all-white. The great powers of Europe field a substantial number of non-European soldiers. France draws heavily on her African colonies to offset Germany's larger population. African soldiers serve on the Western Front alongside French *poilus*. The British use units from the Indian Army in Europe.

The United States Army very reluctantly allows black Americans to serve in separate units (with white officers). Interestingly, some all-black American companies are equipped with French gear and lent to French battalions, making them a rare example of black and white soldiers together.

For non-white characters to serve alongside whites, much the same reasons as for women apply: They must have some indispensable quality which overcomes racism of the times.

Service Branches

A character's skills and abilities depend on what branch of service he's in. The long period of peace before World War I has led to differences in doctrine, equipment and training between the service branches almost as great as the differences between one country's army and another.

Armor Crewman

To break the stalemate on the Western Front, the Allies come up with the idea of putting armor on a motorized tractor, adding some guns, and using the resulting juggernaut to break through enemy lines. The name "tank" is a code name to disguise the true purpose of the machines. Armor crews come from infantry, artillery, engineers, and even cavalry. Tank units lack any tactical doctrine or special training beyond the actual operation of their vehicle. Pick skills and Edges based on prior career.

- **Additional Gear:** Tank crews carry no personal weapons beyond a pistol and 24 pistol rounds.

Assault Trooper

As the stalemate drags on, both sides begin to train and equip special assault troops to break through enemy lines by stealth instead of just charging ahead. The most famous are the German Stormtroopers; British and French commanders put together ad-hoc assault teams from the men they have on hand.

- **Attribute Requirements:** Spirit d8+, Vigor d6+.
- **Skill Requirements:** Fighting, Shooting, Stealth, Throwing.
- **Useful Edges:** Grizzled; any Combat Edges, especially Blood and Guts or Combat Reflexes.
- **Special:** None.
- **Additional Gear:** Grenade bag, bayonet. Many assault troopers have a fighting knife, shotgun, or sharpened spade.

Artilleryman

The Great War is a war of artillery. The big guns can lay down a pulverizing barrage from 10 miles away, but artillery crews almost never see the enemy they're shooting at. Naval gunners sometimes operate artillery on land. Artillerymen can find themselves fighting for their lives if their positions get overrun by a surprise attack.

- **Attribute Requirements:** Strength d6+.
- **Skill Requirements:** Knowledge (Artillery) or Gunnery, Repair.
- **Useful Edges:** Brawny.
- **Special:** None.
- **Additional Gear:** Carbines instead of rifles.



Cavalry Trooper

The cavalry once dominated battlefields, and is still the favorite of Europe's horse-mad upper classes at the start of the Great War. But technology changes the cavalry's job to scouting and raiding rather than glorious charges. When fighting starts, the horsemen dismount and fight like light infantry. On the Western Front that means they don't do much at all, but on the plains of the east there's still room for horse soldiers.

- **Attribute Requirements:** None.
- **Skill Requirements:** Fighting, Shooting, Riding.
- **Useful Edges:** Alertness, Steady Hands.
- **Special:** None.
- **Additional Gear:** Carbines instead of rifles with 120 rounds, most have .45 pistols with 21 rounds. Cavalry are issued sabers, but even officers seldom carry them after 1914.

Colonial Soldier

Colonial troops come in two varieties. In lands with a substantial population of European settlers, like South Africa or Algeria, they are white volunteers trained and equipped much like soldiers in the mother

country. In other places they are native inhabitants, typically recruited from the local warrior caste, and trained to defend the colonies against bandit raids and foreign invaders. As the Western Front gobbles up men, colonial troops find themselves on the front lines in Europe and around the world. Their training is close to European standard, but their equipment is typically second-rate. Often when the regular army adopts a new weapon, the old gear gets passed to the colonials.

- **Attribute Requirements:** Vigor d6+.
- **Skill Requirements:** Fighting, Shooting.
- **Useful Edges:** Any Combat Edges.
- **Special:** None.
- **Additional Gear:** Sun helmet and tropical uniform (in the tropics).



Infantryman

Infantry riflemen are the backbone of all Great War armies. They're called Tommies, Poilus, Doughboys, or worse. Their two most important weapons are the rifle and the shovel. On defense they're almost unbeatable: a squad of skilled riflemen can throw out almost as much fire as a machine gun, and once they dig in, nothing but a heavy artillery barrage can get them out. On the offensive, they hurl their unprotected bodies across No Man's Land and hope no bullet has their name on it.

- **Attribute Requirements:** Vigor d6+.
- **Skill Requirements:** Fighting d6+, Shooting d6+, Throwing d4+.
- **Useful Edges:** Alertness, Danger Sense, any Combat Edges.
- **Special:** None.
- **Additional Gear:** Shovel, bayonet, 75 rifle rounds. Infantrymen often have a heavy fighting knife or a pistol for close-quarters combat in the trenches.

Marine

Marines began as shipborne troops, but in the Great War they fight on land battlefields alongside regular infantry. United States Marines have considerable experience from interventions in

Latin America and Asia, providing the American Expeditionary Force with veterans ready for combat. British and Russian marines have similar standards of training and spirit. French and German naval troops are sailors equipped as regular infantry, and should use that template.

- **Attribute Requirements:** Spirit d6+.
- **Skill Requirements:** Fighting d6+, Shooting d6+, Throwing d4+.
- **Useful Edges:** Any Combat Edges.
- **Special:** None.
- **Additional Gear:** 75 rounds. Marines in the trenches may add a fighting knife or a pistol to the basic gear.

Medic

Medics face all the hardship and dangers of front-line combat, but their mission is to save lives. Many conscientious objectors opposed to the war serve with distinction as medics and stretcher bearers. In theory, medics treat *all* wounded, regardless of nationality. Most medics don't carry weapons on the battlefield. They wear Red Cross brassards and helmet covers, but in heavy combat few gunners stop shooting long enough to check. Nurses behind the lines have much the same skill set as medics.

- **Attribute Requirements:** None.

Renault FT tanks roll toward the front lines.



- **Skill Requirements:** Healing d4+, Knowledge (Medicine) d4+.
- **Useful Edges:** Fleet-Footed, Healer.
- **Special:** None.
- **Additional Gear:** First aid kit.

Officer

The gap between officers and enlisted men in most World War I armies is profound. (The United States Army is a conspicuous exception.) Soldiers are workers and farmers, officers come from the educated upper classes. In some armies (like Imperial Russia's), good birth is about the only requirement for command rank. Other nations try to train their leaders, with varying degrees of success. The casualty rate among junior officers—lieutenants and captains—is higher than any other rank.

- **Attribute Requirements:** Smarts d6+.
- **Skill Requirements:** Knowledge (Battle) d4+, Riding d4+.
- **Useful Edges:** Any Leadership Edges.
- **Special:** Officers must purchase the Rank (Officer) Edge during character creation.
- **Additional Gear:** Two pistol magazines. Swords are issued but seldom carried. Officers frequently buy extra equipment and tailored uniforms with personal funds.

Pilot

The only truly glamorous part of the Great War is in the air. With millions stuck in the trenches below, pilots soar through the sky faster than an express train, fighting duels one on one in the clouds. A pilot's primary job is reconnaissance, keeping track of enemy positions and troop movements. Denying the use of the air to the enemy comes second, but many pilots seek out the thrill of combat. Zeppelin crews use the Sailor template instead.

- **Attribute Requirements:** Agility d6+, Smarts d6+.
- **Skill Requirements:** Notice d6+, Piloting d4+.
- **Useful Edges:** Ace, Steady Hands.
- **Special:** Characters starting as pilots must take the Rank (Officer) or Rank (NCO) Edge during character creation.
- **Additional Gear:** Pilots ignore all other equipment and substitute a flying helmet, goggles, warm jacket, pistol with two extra magazines, and a small flask of hot chocolate or soup. Zeppelin crewmen wear coveralls, felt boots, and have no sidearm.

Sailor

Europe's navies trained and prepared for a war of titanic fleet actions and battleship duels that never came. The main battle fleets only leave

harbor once. The crews of commerce raiders, escort cruisers, and submarines see far more action. With the fleets sitting idle and armies hungry for men, battalions of naval infantry head for the battlefield, and sailors operate heavy artillery.

- **Attribute Requirements:** Agility d6+.
- **Skill Requirements:** Boating d4+, Shooting d4+, Swimming d4+, and Knowledge (either Battle, Gunnery, or Marine Systems) d4+.
- **Useful Edges:** Jury Rig.
- **Special:** Characters starting as naval officers must take Rank (Officer) during character creation.
- **Additional Gear:** Naval troops on land are equipped as Infantry or Artillery. At sea delete the bedroll, mess kit, water bottle, and gas mask.

Civilian Packages

Occultist

There was a fad for occult studies among Europe's educated classes in the decades before the Great War. As the War descends into weirdness and horror, occultists and spiritualists get pressed into service by the intelligence services. Of course, a great many pre-war occultists are frauds, but some of them find themselves tossed into the middle of weird situations anyway.

- **Attribute Requirements:** None.
- **Skill Requirements:** Knowledge (Occult) d4+.
- **Useful Edges:** Frauds are Charismatic; genuine mystics may have the Arcane Background (Magic) or Arcane Background (Spiritualist) Edge (see page 93).
- **Special:** None.

Red Cross

With millions of men plunged into the chaos and misery of the trenches, international charitable organizations bear much of the burden of keeping them sane and healthy. Red Cross volunteers visit prisoners of war and inspect conditions among the troops. The American army is accompanied by a contingent of volunteers from the YMCA and the Salvation Army. Most are well-regarded, though troops complain that the YMCA volunteers charge too much for coffee and cigarettes and stay safe in rear areas.

- **Attribute Requirements:** None.
- **Skill Requirements:** Healing d4+.
- **Useful Edges:** Luck.
- **Special:** None.
- **Additional Gear:** No military gear. Instead, volunteers get a distinctive uniform similar to what the troops wear, a steel helmet, and gas mask.

Reporter

War reporters during the First World War must tailor their reports to the wishes of government morale and propaganda offices. Few journalists complain. Because the lines in the West are nearly immobile, reporters tend to pay brief visits to the trenches, then return to safe areas in the rear, rather than enduring the hardship of the front line troops. Before America enters the war, Yankee reporters can visit both sides of the lines.

- **Attribute Requirements:** Smarts d6+.
- **Skill Requirements:** Knowledge (Journalism) d4+.
- **Useful Edges:** Investigator, Strong Willed.
- **Special:** None.
- **Additional Gear:** None.

Scientist

World War I is the first “high-tech” war, where combatants look to new weapons to break the deadlock. Scientists tend to work in safe laboratories, but a few researchers venture into the war zones to get important data or test theories. Research unrelated to the war might send scientists to remote locations around the world.

- **Attribute Requirements:** Smarts d8+.
- **Skill Requirements:** Knowledge (one Science specialty) d6+.
- **Useful Edges:** Investigator, Scholar.
- **Special:** None.
- **Additional Gear:** None.

Spy

Spies come from a bewildering variety of backgrounds: professional military intelligence officers, businessmen, academic scholars, missionaries, and a few unclassifiable adventurers. Several Americans volunteer to serve as agents for the British and French governments. There are no formal training programs, either, and many spies must learn their trade on the job. Military intelligence officers should use the Officer template above.

- **Attribute Requirements:** Smarts d6+.
- **Skill Requirements:** Investigation d6+, Knowledge (Language(s)) d4+, Notice d6+, Streetwise d4+.
- **Useful Edges:** Connections, Investigator.
- **Special:** None.
- **Additional Gear:** Spies get a budget of \$100 for equipment.

Basic Equipment

Standard gear for all military personnel is a uniform, bedroll, overcoat, mess kit, water bottle, and service weapon. After 1915 add a steel helmet and gas mask.

Clothing

Boots: The armies of Europe start the war with tall, shiny leather boots. By 1916 they switch to lower, cheaper, more comfortable models covered by waterproof cloth leggings or puttees. Officers and rear-area troops sometimes keep their nice-looking old-model footwear. Weight: 6 lbs. for knee-high boots, 4 lbs. for mid-calf boots.

Cap: Armies begin with felt or leather caps, and soon switch to more practical cloth caps which fold easily for storage. During the winter, soldiers add wool hats sent from home or knitted themselves. Russian soldiers have fur hats for cold weather. Weight: ½ lb.

Coveralls: Commonly worn by mechanics or soldiers on work detail, these are simple farm-style overalls with a bib front. Weight: 3 lbs.

Greatcoat: Every army has them. At the start of the war they are heavy wool, reaching almost to the ankles. British officers popularize a lighter, waterproof cloth overcoat, the famous “trench coat,” which sets a style for the rest of the century. Weight: 6 lbs.

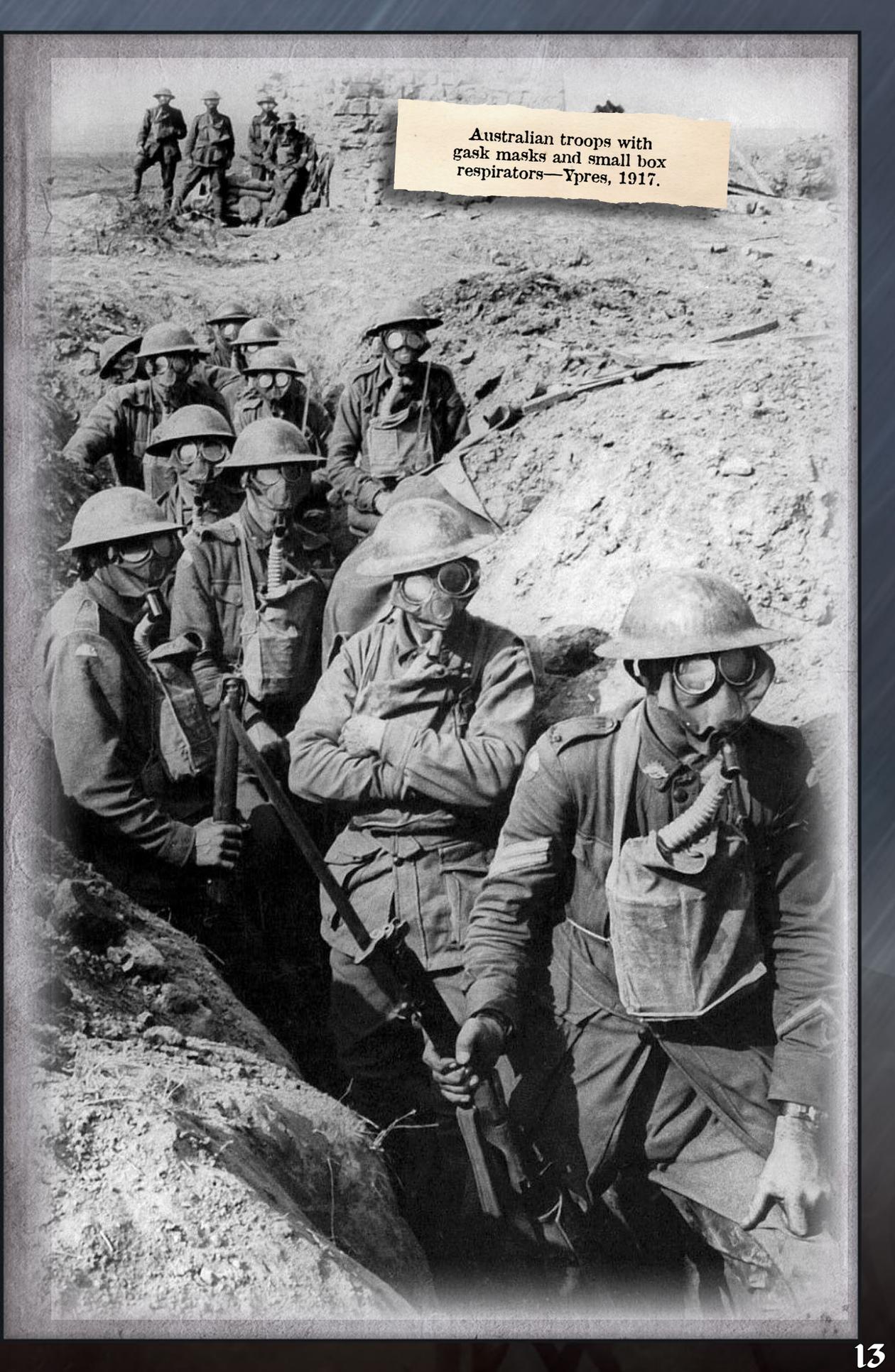
Uniform: Most armies wear woolen trousers and tunic over a cotton shirt. Tropical uniforms replace the wool with cotton. Most armies start the war with khaki or gray-green uniforms; the striking red pants and dark blue coat of the French Army soon gives way to a grayish blue. Different manufacturers and unreliable dyes mean that garments vary wildly in color. Officers buy their uniforms from civilian tailors, so they’re much more stylish and durable. Weight: 4 lbs.

Armor and Protection

With the exception of some ornamental cavalry helmets and cuirasses, the armies of Europe begin the Great War without armor at all. They quickly adopt steel helmets for all ranks, and experiments with body armor go on throughout the war. The invention of gas warfare quickly makes gas protection standard for all troops.

Cavalry Cuirass: An ornamental breastplate in polished steel, this protects the torso against hits from the front only, but is bulky and uncomfortable. Armor: +1. Weight: 8 lbs.

Gas Mask: Early models use separate goggles and a nose-and-mouth covering soaked in gas-



Australian troops with
gask masks and small box
respirators—Ypres, 1917.

neutralizing chemicals, or a protective hood without a respirator. These give a +1 bonus to resist gas. Late-war gas masks are rubber-coated canvas or leather with built-in goggles and filter apparatus, and give a +2 bonus. Wearing any gas mask imposes a -2 penalty on all skill rolls. Weight: 2 lbs. for early models, 3 lbs. for later ones.

Sniper Breastplate: A very heavy steel breastplate to protect snipers, machine gunners, and others who have to expose themselves to enemy fire. Protects against torso hits from the front only. Armor: +3. Weight: 35 lbs.

Steel Helmet: All armies adopt helmets by 1916. Gives a 50% chance to protect against a head shot. Armor: +1. Weight: 5 lbs.

Steel Skullcap: Issued to troops early in the war as a stopgap, this is worn under the uniform hat and provides a little protection. Has a 25% chance to protect against shots to the head. Armor: +1. Weight: 2 lbs.

Other Gear

Ammo Pouch: Attaches to belt or web gear, holds about four 5-round clips or 20 loose cartridges. Weight ½ lb.

Backpack: Rubberized canvas or leather, sometimes with a wooden frame to distribute

weight evenly. Holds the soldier's bedroll, mess kit, water bottle, spade, and other issued gear. Very little space for personal items. Worn on the march and offensive movements, but not on patrol or in the trenches. Weight: 3 lbs. empty.

Bedroll: A wool blanket, sometimes with a rubberized canvas outer cover. Weight: 4 lbs.

Candles: The most common light source for troops. Weight: 1 lb. for a box of 12.

Canteen: A one-quart bottle with canvas cover. French colonial soldiers have a double-size two-liter canteen, which other soldiers adopt as fast as they can get their hands on them. Weight: 3 lbs. full.

Compass: Issued only to officers, this is a simple magnetic compass in a steel case. Weight: ¼ lb.

Duffel Bag: Used to carry larger amounts of personal clothing and gear, particularly for troops deploying overseas. Weight: 2 lbs. empty.

Goggles: Leather goggles with glass lenses, used for protection against wind, sand, and gas. Notice skill suffers a -1 penalty. Weight: ½ lb.

Grenade Bag: A large canvas bag, similar to the bread bag or gas mask holder, with a shoulder strap. Holds 12 grenades. Weight: 1 lb. empty.

Holster: Leather or wood holder for a pistol; attaches to belt or web gear. Weight: 1 lb.



Lantern: Kerosene-fueled lamp with a lens to concentrate the light beam and a steel or brass case to protect the flame from rain and wind. Burns for 40 hours on 1 quart of fuel. Weight: 5 lbs. including fuel.

Map Case: Steel or leather case to protect maps and papers from damp. Issued to officers. Weight: 1 lb. empty.

Mess Kit: A steel pot, plate, and utensils. Soldiers in the French army also carry part of the company's cooking gear. Weight: 2 lbs.

Spade: A steel shovel with a short T-handle, used for digging, fighting, cooking, armor, and just about anything else. As a weapon it does Str+d4; some troops sharpen their spades (Str+d6) for trench fighting. Weight: 5 lbs.

Web Gear: A belt and suspenders, or Sam Browne belt with shoulder strap, used to support the weight of carried gear. Usually leather at the start of the war, canvas by the end. Weight: 1 lb.

Communications

The most reliable method of sending a message during the Great War is to give it to someone who physically carries it to the recipient. In the heat of battle this is extremely dangerous, and message runners become adept at dodging shells and machine-gun fire. Other methods are telephone, telegraph, and even pigeons or dogs.

Carrier Pigeon: A backpack pigeon coop holding four pigeons trained to return to their home coop at headquarters. Messages sent by pigeon have a 50% chance of getting through, as birds can get lost, shot, or brought down by hawks. Weight: 7 lbs. with birds.

Communications Wire: By the end of the war there are more miles of communications wire in the battle zone of the Western Front than in most countries. Lines run from the front trenches back to battalion command posts, which are linked to division headquarters, and so on back to the supreme commanders. Shelling and bad weather can take out the communication system right when it's most needed. Armies experiment with troops carrying phone or telegraph wire on assaults, but it almost never works. Weight: 10 lbs. per 100 yards.

Electronic Eavesdropping: Telegraph and telephone lines are grounded in the soil. The ground current can be picked up by sensitive detectors that are laid along each sides' front lines, and the enemy can listen in on messages. Roll Knowledge (Electronics) with a -1 penalty per 5 yards' distance from the closest enemy phone or telegraph line. Success means the eavesdropper

Clothing

Item	Weight
Boots	6 lbs. knee-high/ 4 lbs. mid-calf
Cap	½ lb.
Coveralls	3 lbs.
Greatcoat	6 lbs.
Uniform	4 lbs.

Armor and Protection

Item	Armor	Weight
Cavalry cuirass	+1	8 lbs.
Gas mask	—	2 lbs./3 lbs.
Sniper breastplate	+3	35 lbs.
Steel helmet	+1	5 lbs.
Steel skullcap	+1	2 lbs.

Other Gear

Item	Weight
Ammo pouch	½ lb.
Backpack	3 lbs. empty
Bedroll	4 lbs.
Candles	1 lb./box of 12
Canteen	3 lbs. full
Compass	¼ lb.
Duffel bag	2 lbs. empty
Goggles	½ lb.
Grenade bag	1 lb. empty
Holster	1 lb.
Lantern	5 lbs. including fuel
Map case	1 lb. empty
Mess kit	2 lbs.
Rations	2 lbs./day
Spade	5 lbs.
Web gear	1 lb.

Communications

Item	Weight
Carrier pigeon coop	7 lbs. with birds
Communications wire	10 lbs./100 yards
Electronic eavesdropping	N/A
Field telegraph	2 lbs.
Field telephone	5 lbs.
Heliograph	1 lb.
Semaphore	10 lbs.
Wireless radio, antenna, and generator	60 lbs.

Medical Equipment

Item	Weight
Bandages	½ lb.
Medical kit	5 lbs.
Stretcher	8 lbs.

can pick up telegraph signals for 10 minutes; a raise means voice signals are audible. Weight: N/A.

Field Telegraph: Morse code signals are robust, fairly quick, and can be encoded. This is the primary method for routine messages. Telegraph messages have a 90% chance of getting through, but delays in the system mean they take 1d6 hours to reach their destination. Weight: 2 lbs. for basic key unit.

Field Telephone: Phones allow fast, real-time communication, but only if the system is working. Under normal circumstances the phone system is working 90% of the time, but if there's a battle going on that drops to 50%. The basic phone is a "candlestick" style receiver with a hand-cranked dynamo and batteries. Weight: 5 lbs.

Heliograph: A heliograph uses mirrors to flash sunlight at the recipient in Morse code. It works over long distances, but can be blocked by smoke, rain, and dust, which are all very common on the battlefield. Needless to say, it's not usable at night. Worse still, message flashes tend to attract the attention of enemy artillery. Heliograph messages have a 50% chance of getting through. Weight: 1 lb. for signal mirror.

Semaphore: Hand-held signal flags can send messages to anyone in visual range, but the enemy can see them and either read your messages or shoot at the signaller. They have a 90% chance of getting through during the day. Weight: 10 lbs. for a pair of flags with handles.

Wireless: The cutting edge of high-tech communication, wireless needs no cables and can't be seen. However the sets are bulky, power-hungry, and delicate. This is the late war American SCR-68 unit, one of the first used on airplanes. It has a 300-foot wire antenna, a wind-powered generator, and a radio transmitter/receiver unit. Range is about 15 miles. Weight: 20 lbs. for the radio, 20 lbs. for the antenna, and 20 lbs. for portable generator.

Food

Nobody likes the food. Troops get canned meat (the French call it "monkey meat"), bread (usually stale by the time it reaches the front), beans, and potatoes or cabbage. Sometimes there's hot soup, carried to the lines in backpack tanks. Soldiers make their own tea and coffee over little stoves, or fire off a couple of hundred rounds from a water-cooled machine gun to boil the water.

Rations: One day's rations for a soldier consists of a pound of canned or dried meat, and a pound of bread or other starch. Weight: 2 lbs.

Medical Equipment

Bandages: A soldier's personal medical kit consists of cloth bandages and cotton dressings in a cotton drawstring bag. Weight: ½ lb.

Medical Kit: A medic's bag contains bandages, dressings, bottles of carbolic acid or alcohol antiseptic, and a bottle of morphine tablets, in a leather or canvas bag. A Great War medical kit adds +2 to Healing skill rolls. See Medical Supplies, page 33, for more details. Weight: 5 lbs.

Stretcher: A collapsible canvas stretcher with wood poles. Weight: 8 lbs.

Explosives

Black Powder: The original gunpowder, still useful as an explosive. It must be confined to explode; a pile of loose gunpowder just burns vigorously. Wet gunpowder is inert. Dry gunpowder exposed to flame or a blasting cap automatically goes off. Weight: Typically issued in 1 lb. bags or cans.

Dynamite: Nitroglycerine in a handy eight-inch-stick form. Detonates by electric current, heating, or sudden shock. Each turn dynamite is exposed to open flame roll d6; on a 5 or 6 it explodes. Dynamite caught in the blast radius of another explosion goes off on a 4-6. Old ("sweaty") dynamite or dynamite which has been frozen explodes on a 6 if dropped. Weight: 1 lb. per stick.

Gelignite: A putty or jelly-like explosive made of nitrocellulose, gelignite is much safer than dynamite. If exposed to flame it burns but won't blow up. It is detonated by shock or electric current. Gelignite accidentally shot or caught in another explosion goes off on a 5 or 6 on d6. Weight: Typically issued in 1-lb. cans.

TNT: A stable explosive, safer than dynamite but less powerful. Most explosive artillery shells in the Great War contain TNT. It has a low melting point, so it explodes in fire only on a roll of 6 on d6. TNT won't explode if dropped. Weight: Typically issued in 1 lb. blocks.

Blasting Caps: Detonator caps to set off explosives. Gelignite and TNT won't go off without one. A cap going off by itself causes the person holding it to become Shaken on a failed Vigor roll. If the roll is a 1 (or a critical failure for a Wild Card), the character suffers a wound as well. Weight: negligible.

Detonator Wire: Wire to connect an electrical detonator with the explosive or blasting cap. Comes in spools of 500 feet. Weight: 5 lbs. per spool.

Electrical Detonator: The familiar plunger-topped box, with a dynamo inside powered by

the action of the plunger. It can set off up to 10 blasting caps simultaneously. Weight: 15 lbs.

Fuse Cord: Cord impregnated with nitric acid or gunpowder, used to set off black powder or dynamite charges. It can be either fast-burning or slow. A fast fuse burns at two feet per round, while a slow fuse burns two feet per minute. Weight: 1 lb. per 20 feet.

Weapon Issue

These are the primary weapons issued by each of the warring powers. However, exceptions are common. Officers often carry personal pistols (the Mauser was popular in all armies), and units operating in conjunction with an ally might swap their original weapons for those of the ally to simplify supply.

Austria-Hungary: Steyr-Mannlicher M1895 is the infantry rifle. Officers carry the Rast-Gasser M1912 pistol. Cavalry use the Roth-Steyr M1907 pistol and the Steyr-Mannlicher M95 carbine.

Belgium: Infantry carry the Mauser M1889 rifle, or French equipment such as the Chauchat and Hotchkiss machine guns. Officers carry the M1900 pistol. The Force Publique use antiquated Albini rifles or British gear later in the war.

France: The Lebel rifle is the standard infantry rifle. Colonial troops and Foreign Legionnaires

carry the Berthier rifle. Cavalry and artillery troops carry the Berthier carbine. Officers use the Modèle 1892 or Ruby pistol.

Germany: The Gewehr 98 is the standard rifle. In 1918 assault troops carry the MP18 submachine gun. Some artillerymen use the "Artillery Luger" P08. Officers use the Luger P08 pistol, Reichsrevolver, or Mauser C96. Some pilots and Navy troops get the Mondragón rifle.

Italy: The Carcano rifle is the infantry rifle; some reserve units use the antiquated Vetterli. Officers use the Glisenti M1910 pistol or the Bodeo 1889.

Russia: The standard infantry rifle is the Mosin-Nagant. Officers carry Nagant or Smith & Wesson .44 revolvers.

Turkey: Infantry carry the Mauser 1898 or Gewehr 98. Officers use the Mauser or Luger pistol.

United Kingdom: Troops carry the Lee-Enfield rifle. Officers use the Webley revolver.

United States: The Springfield rifle is the infantry weapon; some units attached to French battalions have Berthier rifles. Officers carry the Colt M1911 automatic, S&W Model 10, or Colt M1917 revolver. The BAR is issued in July 1918, and goes into action in September.

Canadian machine-gun crews dig in amidst No Man's Land's devastation.



A British soldier stands sentry in a trench on the Somme, 1916.



Skills

All skills from the *Savage Worlds* core rules are available. A few have special rules in this setting, and are noted below.

Language Barriers

(This Setting Rule directly affects skill use and so is detailed here rather than Chapter Three.) Attempting to use relatively complex equipment such as aircraft, artillery pieces, ships, or vehicles with instruments in a language your character doesn't speak, or trying to use Persuasion, Taunt, or Intimidation on a foe who doesn't speak your language, incurs a -2 penalty.

The War Master should use common sense here. Intimidating a foe by pointing a weapon at him shouldn't incur the penalty, but simply talking to him in a tongue he doesn't understand does.

Note that most educated Europeans spoke at least one foreign language, typically French or German.

Knowledge

Knowledge skills are very important in the *Weird Wars* setting. Many military specialties directly depend on a specific Knowledge skill focus. Some common Knowledge skills are listed below.

Artillery: The Artillery skill covers the use and maintenance of crew-served indirect fire weapons

like mortars, artillery pieces, rockets, naval guns, and torpedoes—weapons that can be fired at targets out of line of sight. Usually, characters with this skill are part of a crew. They know the basic firing and gun-laying procedures for the weapon but cannot operate it alone.

The War Master should decide when this is or isn't possible. For example, one man can load and fire a mortar, but readying a 16" naval gun is impossible—the shells alone are too heavy. If it's important (and possible), figure it takes a single man working alone as many rounds as the gun typically has in crew.

Battle: This skill is used to employ military units in combat. Battle is broken down into Aerial, Land, and Naval specialties, with each one a separate skill. An Army officer knows how to maneuver a platoon of infantrymen, for example, but wouldn't be able to do anything with a squadron of torpedo boats. The skill is used to resolve mass engagements using the **Mass Battles** system (see *Savage Worlds*). It can also be used to analyze an enemy battle plan or other subjective uses.

Communications: The use and maintenance of field telephones or wireless radio equipment is covered by this skill. Those who have it also know Morse code.

Successful use of Knowledge (Communications) means the character can get a battle-damaged field phone working, or tap into an enemy line. With radio, messages the operator sends are clear

Hindrances

and accurate, while failure indicates the message was garbled or incomplete in some way. When receiving a message, success means the operator can pick a message out of the static, or more finely tune the receiver to get a clearer signal.

Construction: This is the skill used to put up buildings, dig trenches and tunnels, and build roads and bridges. It's useful for sappers and officers as well. Successful use of Construction can get a job done quickly and well.

Cryptography: Those who use encoding and decoding devices have this skill, which covers knowledge of the history and theory of cryptography. Characters can also create their own codes and attempt to break codes for which they do not have a key.

Demolitions: This skill covers all aspects of demolitions and the use of high explosives. It can be used to set and defuse charges, and to estimate the amount of explosives necessary to demolish buildings and structures.

Espionage: This is how to be a spy, including setting up and running surveillance, counter-surveillance, and spy networks. It also covers tradecraft, like arranging clandestine meetings and "dead drop" transfers. Use of this skill generally determines your character's success or failure at spotting or recognizing other agents' handiwork, or the quality of his own espionage activities.

Gunnery: This skill works like Knowledge (Artillery) but applies to the use, knowledge, and firing of large naval guns (anything larger than anti-aircraft weapons).

Navigation: This is an especially important skill for any combat officer or non-com in any branch of the service, and it certainly can't hurt for an enlisted man to know how to use a map and compass. Navigation can be used to determine position, plot a course, or estimate how long it will take to get to a destination. Failure on a Navigation roll means the character is either lost, off course, or takes longer to get to a destination than planned (which can be dangerous if one's vehicle is low on fuel).

Occult: Knowledge of the mysterious and supernatural falls under Occult. Those who have dabbled in this field know something about the history of secret societies, magical traditions (like kabbalism, voodoo, tribal, or shamanic magic), and the paranormal. It is different from the Arcane Background Edge in that it represents only knowledge of the occult, not the ability to do anything with that knowledge.

Although every Hindrance from *Savage Worlds* is available in *Weird Wars*, War Masters must use their discretion in what Hindrances they allow characters to take. Most regular armies won't accept Elderly or Young characters, for instance, and soldiers with disabilities like One Arm are more likely to serve as rear echelon troops or staff officers, if they serve at all. Those are perfectly appropriate Hindrances for civilians, however, or for soldiers with specialized knowledge the brass can't afford to lose.

Bullet Magnet (Major)

Some soldiers are just in the wrong place at the wrong time. This character makes a habit of it. This unfortunate soul is hit by accidental fire (using the Innocent Bystander rules) on a 1-2 for single-shot weapons, and a 1-3 for shotguns or full-auto fire. He's also hit on a 1-2 under Heavy Fire (see page 34).

Doubting Thomas (Major)

Besides the description presented in *Savage Worlds*, Doubting Thomases are just not prepared to deal with the things that make *Weird Wars*... weird. Characters with this Hindrance suffer double Sanity loss when such an event occurs. On the plus side, they start with a Sanity of +2 for their stubborn faith in the mundane.

Fanatic (Major)

Your hero believes so strongly in his country, King, philosophy, or religion that he'll do almost anything for it, and often tries to persuade or convert those who don't subscribe to his beliefs into doing so. Fanaticism motivates troops on both sides, from avid Frenchmen willing to die to liberate Alsace from the Hun, to Germans fighting to preserve Teutonic *kultur*, to Ottoman soldiers waging jihad against the British. If your character is ordered to do something that serves or is motivated by his beliefs, he must do it, however foolish or dangerous it might be. His attitude among friendly troops may be disadvantageous depending on the situation, and the War Master may apply a -2 Charisma modifier when appropriate.

Goldbrick (Minor)

This soldier just can't be bothered. It's difficult for him to get up and get motivated about work or other responsibilities. He actively dodges assigned tasks or tries to get someone else to do

his work. When forced to perform a task, his effort is half-hearted and he tries to finish as quickly and effortlessly as possible. A character with this Hindrance has a hard time getting promotions (-2 to Promotion rolls). His reputation for being a shirker may also not sit well with his squadmates or superior officers, so he has a -2 Charisma penalty with them.

Replacement (Major)

You're fresh off the train from boot camp and new to the unit. To make things worse, the training didn't take as well as it should have. Most of your squad are reluctant to befriend you because they don't think you'll last very long. The newbie is never dealt cards on the first round of any combat (he's always "surprised"). In addition, he subtracts 2 from Notice rolls to detect ambushes or booby traps, as well as most Common Knowledge rolls related to the theater of operations. To top it off, the poor guy gets the worst duties in the platoon—latrine detail, filling sandbags, KP, and digging graves, to name a few.

Of course, a newbie doesn't stay new forever. The reason the Hindrance is so awful is that it can go away. After each relatively active month of service, the hero makes a Smarts roll at -2. If the roll is successful, he drops one group of penalties—either the Action Card penalty or the -2 to Notice and Common Knowledge rolls. He may roll again after another active month to rid himself of the other penalty, at which point he's no longer a replacement. Not every soldier who steps off the train has this Hindrance—only those knuckleheads who take a little longer to adjust to the realities of war.

Shell Shocked (Minor or Major)

Trench warfare put tremendous stress on soldiers in the battle zone. Some men could cope better than others, but everyone has a breaking point. Once that point is passed, psychological breakdown begins. Soldiers call it "the shakes," or "shellshock."

At a Minor level, the Shell Shocked Hindrance means your character has -1 to his Sanity and tends to stare a lot. As a Major Hindrance, Sanity and Charisma suffer a -2 penalty. At either level, whenever the character suffers Sanity loss he must make a Spirit roll or be mentally Incapacitated for 1d6 rounds (2d6 rounds as a Major Hindrance).

Note that armies in the Great War had no experience dealing with soldiers crippled by severe stress. They tended to call it cowardice and punished incapacitated soldiers with rank reductions, harsh duties, or firing squads.

Slow (Major)

Some people have trouble adjusting to the split-second pace of modern warfare. This soldier is just a little slow on the uptake, or maybe freezes up when lead starts flying. He draws two Action Cards in combat and acts on the worst. If he draws a Joker, he uses it normally and ignores his Hindrance for the round. Slow characters cannot take the Quick Edge, but they can improve their reaction time by taking the Level Headed Edge (but not during character creation). Level Headed allows them to draw one card and act normally. Improved Level Headed grants them two cards and they act on the best of the two.

Edges

Some Edges are not suitable for a *Weird War I* campaign. The Arcane Background, Champion, Holy/Unholy Warrior, Mentalist, and Wizard Edges should be reserved for nonplayer characters, but Weird Science is allowed. Though many officers had aristocratic titles, the Noble Edge doesn't apply.

Background Edges

Academy Graduate

Requirements: Novice, Smarts d6+

Your character went through Sandhurst, St. Cyr, West Point, or the Kriegsakademie, making him a member of a special club within the army leadership. Academy-trained officers get +2 Charisma for all dealings with headquarters and staff officers of their own service behind the front lines, but not the field officers out in the trenches. The hero can also ignore any Rank requirement for Leadership Edges.

Enlisted men are suspicious of junior officers from the "old boys' club." Academy Graduate lieutenants get a -2 Charisma penalty when dealing with enlisted troops, until they reach the rank of Captain. Troops obey orders sullenly, move slowly, and show only as much respect as required to avoid the stockade.

Arcane Exposure

Requirements: Novice

Your character has had a brush with the supernatural. Perhaps you saw a ghost, or read some mystic tome. Whatever the cause, you know that strange things really can exist, and you're more prepared than most people to encounter them. Add +2 to Sanity and Fear rolls when facing supernatural terrors.



College Boy

Requirements: Novice, Smarts d8+

You're a University man, from Oxford, Heidelberg, Harvard, or the Sorbonne. This Edge provides an extra four skill points to spend on Smarts-related skills. At least one skill must be a Knowledge skill at d6 or better. Being "at University" also gives the character informal ties to other graduates of the same school.

Grizzled

Requirements: Novice, Smarts d6+, Spirit d6+, Vigor d8+, Fighting d8+, Shooting d8+

This character is a veteran. Early in the war it means he saw service in colonial wars before 1914; later on it means he's managed to survive the carnage on the front. A Grizzled character begins play as Seasoned, and his military grade is two levels higher than normal.

Grizzled soldiers get four Advances during character creation, as if they had earned 20 Experience Points in play, but there is a price. The character has to "pay off" these bonus Advances with earned experience, so the first 20 Experience Points earned must go for that.

An Enlisted character with the Grizzled edge begins with rank E-3; a Grizzled character with Rank (NCO) begins as E-7. Those with Rank

(Officer) begin as an O-3. See the Rank Tables for grades and titles depending on nationality and service branch.

National Identity

Requirements: Novice, Wild Card

The soldiers of each nation in the Great War had an "identity" associated with them. Americans were "lucky," British were "plucky," and the Russians seemed fatalistic for most of the conflict. Soldiers with this Edge make this identity iconic by choosing one of the special abilities below. Characters from other nations can choose any of these abilities with the approval of the WM.

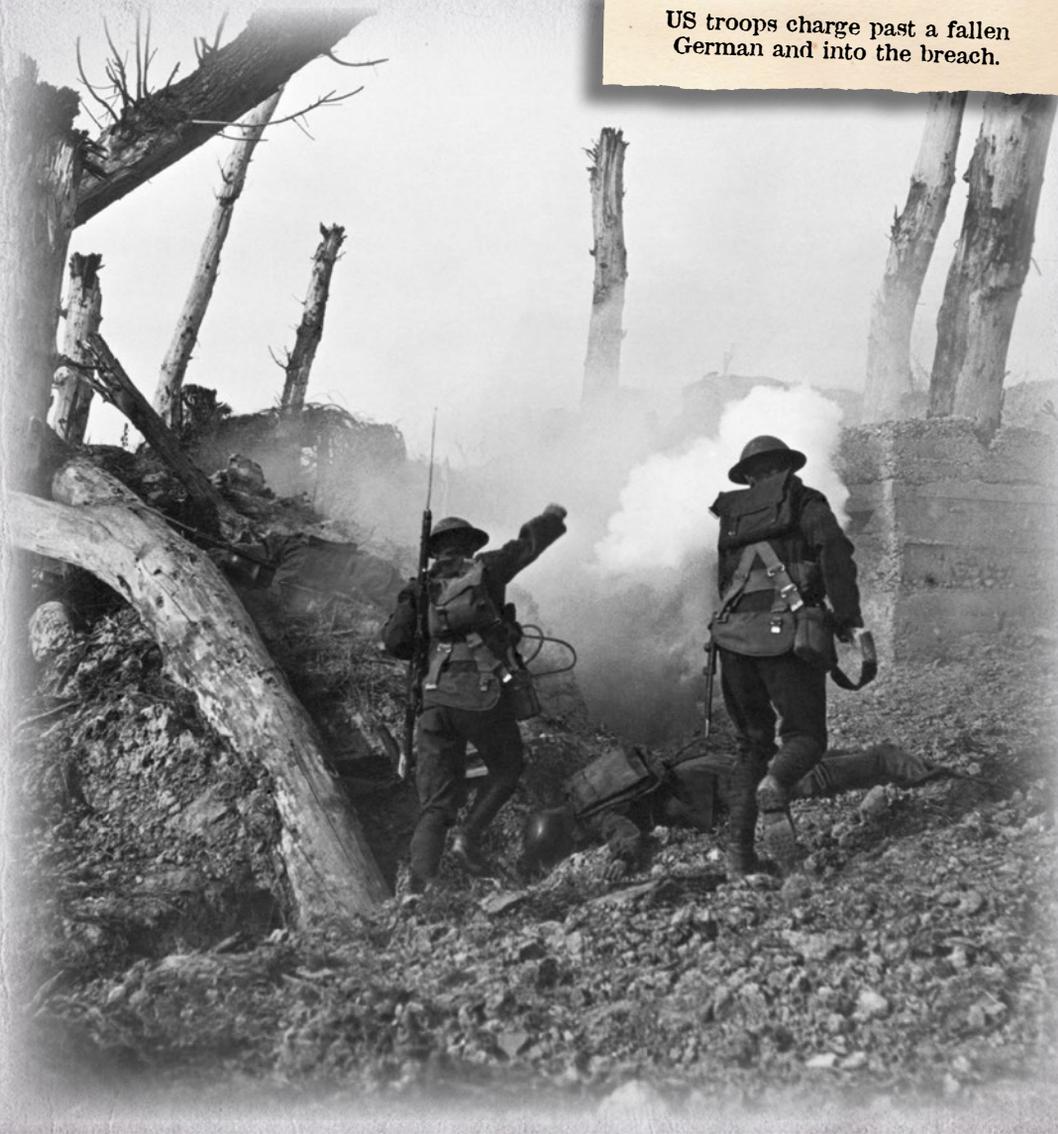
- **ANZAC Camaraderie:** The troops from Australia and New Zealand defined the identity of their people by facing the tremendous casualties and horrible conditions during the Gallipoli campaign with their unique concept of "mateship," reflecting the qualities of loyalty, equality, and friendship. ANZAC troops add +2 to Spirit rolls if adjacent to an ally.
- **British Pluck:** The British "stiff upper lip" made them incredibly resilient under even the most dreadful circumstances. "Tommys" add +2 to Spirit rolls made to resist Fear and Intimidation. It does not add to Spirit rolls to recover from being Shaken.

- **Canadian Heart:** As Britain's largest Dominion, Canada was an important part of the Allied war effort. Canadian soldiers are eager to prove themselves, and get +4 on Trait and damage rolls when dealt a Joker rather than +2.
- **French Élan:** The French Army began the war planning to attack along the whole front, relying on French fighting spirit to overcome the enemy's superior numbers. Even after the debacle of the first weeks, some of that spirit remained. If a Frenchman with this Edge spends a Benny to make a Trait roll, his Wild Die increases one die type, usually to a d8. This is different from the Elan Edge (see *Savage Worlds*), though the two work together for particularly proud individuals.
- **German Efficiency:** German troops get some of the best training in Europe. A character with this Edge treats all Trait requirements

for Combat Edges as one die type less, though Rank requirements remain the same.

- **Russian Fatalism:** Many Russians seemed resigned to inevitable suffering, whether in the trenches, in captivity, or dealing with shortages at home. Yet they struggled on, until one disaster too many sparked revolt. Russian characters with this Edge ignore one level of wound modifier, which stacks with Nerves of Steel and Improved Nerves of Steel.
- **US Luck:** The American Doughboys joined the war to "make the world safe for democracy" and certainly appeared to have fortune or fate on their side. As evidenced by Sgt. York, "Yanks" would sometimes succeed at near impossible tasks. Whenever the character spends a Benny to make a roll, he ignores up to -2 points of penalties.

US troops charge past a fallen German and into the breach.



Upper Class

Requirements: Novice

Your character is “well-born” and may have a noble title, or be heir to one. In the early 20th century, the prerequisites of nobility aren’t as impressive as they once were. Upper Class characters get a +1 Charisma bonus whenever dealing with other aristocrats or with lower-class individuals from their own society who support the traditional order. They get a -1 Charisma penalty when interacting with revolutionaries and others who support social change. Upper Class characters don’t get any bonus to wealth, but they do have connections to the “Establishment” which can give them some minor special privileges. A junior officer of “good family” might wind up being invited to dine with the General and his staff, and is more likely to be given a sympathetic hearing if he goes outside the rules. American characters can’t take this Edge.

Combat Edges

Blood and Guts

Requirements: Veteran

This veteran soldier has seen so much death and bloodshed it no longer affects him. He automatically passes Fear tests caused by gore. His callous detachment also gives him a +1 damage bonus in hand-to-hand combat.

Dig In!

Requirements: Novice, Smarts d6+

Your soldier has learned the importance of staying down and dug in. When the warrior is lying prone or under cover, all foes suffer a -1 penalty (in addition to normal cover bonuses) to all attack rolls, and he gets a +1 Toughness bonus to avoid damage from Area Effect weapons.

Improved Dig In!

Requirements: Seasoned, Dig In!

As above, but foes get a -2 penalty, and his Toughness bonus against Area Effect fire is +2.

Grazing Fire

Requirements: Seasoned, Rock and Roll!, Shooting d8+

This soldier is more effective than most in using a machine gun for Suppressive Fire. Targets who roll a 1 or 2 on their Spirit checks are hit and take damage.

Hose ‘Em Down

Requirements: Novice, Shooting d8+

Machine gunners with this Edge can employ Suppressive Fire to control a larger swath of the battlefield. When using a braced medium or heavy machine gun, the gunner can suppress an area equal to two Medium Burst Templates. The second template must be adjacent to the first, in any direction, and the weapon uses twice as much ammunition as normal.

Improved Hose ‘Em Down

Requirements: Seasoned, Hose ‘Em Down

Gunners with Improved Hose ‘Em Down can suppress an area covered by three Medium Burst Templates. The three templates must be adjacent. Ammo consumption is tripled.

Incoming!

Requirements: Seasoned

Soldiers on the front get very good at distinguishing between the sound of shells passing by overhead and the deadly sound of an approaching round. When a character with this Edge is in an artillery attack, he can get prone before the shell hits, reducing damage from the attack by 2. This is cumulative with Dig In!

Leadership Edges

A Few Good Men

Requirements: Heroic, Smarts d8+, Command, Inspire

This leader demands the best from his troops. When the War Master checks to see which of the commander’s troops are alive or dead after a battle, any failures receive one reroll. The Edge affects up to 12 men (a typical squad), and does not stack if multiple characters have the ability. If the leader is the overall commander in a Mass Battle, roll a d6 whenever a token is lost; on a 6, the token survives.

A Few More Good Men

Requirements: Heroic, Smarts d8+, A Few Good Men, Command, Inspire

As A Few Good Men, but the commander can affect up to a platoon’s worth of men (no more than 24).

Art of War

Requirements: Novice, Smarts d8+, Knowledge (Battle) d8+

Some commanders have an intuitive grasp of strategy and tactics, and keen insight into the minds of their enemies. They easily outmaneuver and outfight more mediocre opponents.

Characters with the Art of War Edge are the ones whose quotations end up in the history books. Your character adds +2 to Knowledge (Battle) rolls during Mass Battles.

Ery Havoc

Requirements: Veteran, Spirit d8+, Knowledge (Battle) d10+, Command, Fervor

The general has an uncanny knack for knowing when to attack and when to hold back with his troops. Once per Mass Battle, during the Battle Roll Phase, the character may declare a total attack. He must do this before he rolls his Battle die. If the roll succeeds, his enemy loses one extra token.

Death Before Dishonor

Requirements: Veteran, Knowledge (Battle) d10+, Command, Hold the Line

The character has led his men to many victories and they have come to abhor retreat as a stain on their honor. A leader with this Edge adds +2 to Spirit rolls when rolling for his troops' Morale in a Mass Battle.

Rank (NCO or Officer)

Requirements: Novice, Smarts d6+

Non-commissioned officers (sergeants) and regular officers (lieutenants and higher) get to command subordinates, but are also responsible for the success or failure of their men and their mission. They know the thrill of watching a plan come together, and the agony of watching one fall apart.

In *Weird Wars*, the Rank Edge allows NCOs and officers to command a unit appropriate to their rank level. Characters who purchase this Edge get an additional benefit, described below. Nonplayer characters and those who achieve rank during play do not get these additional abilities.

NCOs are the backbone of their squad, and must be tougher, stronger, and more resilient than those they lead. Noncoms with the Rank (NCO) Edge add +2 to their Toughness to reflect their hard-bitten nature. The character's military rank is the lowest for an NCO in his particular service branch (a sergeant in the US Army, for example).

Officers are there to inspire and lead, and should definitely concentrate on Leadership Edges as they advance. To help them get there, officers gain an additional Benny per game session, and may always spend it on those under their command. (An officer with the Common Bond Edge can grant a Benny to anyone—not just those under his command.) A character with the Rank (Officer) Edge starts at the lowest commissioned

officer rank in his particular service branch (usually 2nd Lieutenant or the equivalent of O-1).

Tactical Command: Note that though NCOs and officers may give the orders, tactical control of Extras during play should still be split up among the players as usual. This ensures everyone gets to do something and doesn't overburden the commanders. Remember this is still *Savage Worlds*, and the action should be fast and furious.

Professional Edges

Demo Man

Requirements: Novice, Knowledge (Demolitions) d6+

Your character is skilled with all sorts of explosives, detonators, and booby-traps. He adds +2 to all rolls made to set, disarm, or improvise explosives and booby-traps (but not Notice them). This can cover a range of abilities and skills determined by your War Master, including ordnance disposal, bomb making, or structural demolition.

Medic

Requirements: Novice, Healing d6+

A soldier with this Edge can get wounded soldiers up and fighting again in seconds. If the medic can get to a wounded non-Wild Card by the end of the round in which he was wounded, he can make an immediate Healing roll at -2. If the roll is successful, the victim is merely Shaken instead of wounded.

Mechanically Inclined

Requirements: Novice, Smarts d6+, Repair d6+

The Great War was the first war of technology, and armies quickly discovered the value of trained technicians. Your character is good with mechanical and electrical devices, and can easily figure out how to use and repair them. He gets a +2 bonus to Knowledge or Repair rolls required to use, design, troubleshoot, or repair such devices (engines, wireless sets, encryption devices, field telephones, electrical and hydraulic systems, machinery, etc.).

Social Edges

Band of Brothers

Requirements: Wild Card, Veteran, Common Bond

This group of soldiers has been to Hell and back together. That kind of bond hardens men, and makes them able to better withstand wounds that might otherwise put them out of action. Gain +1 Toughness for each other "brother"

with this ability within 6", to a maximum of +4. If four heroes with the Band of Brothers Edge fight together, for instance, they each gain +3 Toughness.

Scrounger

Requirements: Novice, Smarts d6+, Streetwise d6+

Some soldiers seem to have an uncanny ability to find just what they're looking for among the mountains of equipment shipped into the theater. A soldier with the Scrounger Edge can acquire almost any piece of equipment or luxury item. Once per session, and while in a populated area (such as a large village or town), a successful

Streetwise roll allows the Scrounger to do one of the following:

- Improve one squad's Ammo one level.
- Acquire one "heavy" weapon with limited ammunition (such as a flamethrower, 1d4 hand grenades, or a machine gun—War Master's choice).
- Improve one squad's Rations one level.
- Acquire 2d6 "refills" for a medic's med pack.
- Find 2d6 × \$20 in easily-concealed cash or valuables.
- Acquire some rare but not particularly valuable item (cigars, silk stockings, fine chocolate, a needed spare part, etc.).

Camouflaged US trucks await action in the French countryside.



Weird Edges

The Edges below should only be taken with your War Master's permission.

Ceremonial Casting

Requirements: Novice, Arcane Background (Magic or Miracles)

Those who have stumbled upon the secrets of the unknown have found they can greatly increase the power of certain spells and invocations if they are more carefully and slowly cast.

To cast a spell or miracle using ceremonial casting, the character must take no other actions for 10 minutes. He must be able to speak and freely make gestures with his hands, and must not be Shaken during this period. If those conditions are met, the caster makes his Faith or Spellcasting roll as usual. If successful, he may increase the base Duration of any of the following spells to one hour: *armor*, *boost / lower Trait*, *deflection*, *speaking language*, or *speed*.

The spells may be maintained at the cost of 1 Power Point per target per additional hour.

Courage Under Fire

Requirements: Seasoned, Command, Rank (NCO or Officer)

This leader might just have a guardian angel. Bullets and even artillery fragments seem to whiz right by him, especially when he's doing his duty and commanding those placed under his command.

If your character is standing and not in cover, roll a die for every successful attack that would wound him (including Area Effect attacks). If the die roll is odd, the hero takes no damage. Otherwise he's affected normally.

Haunted

Requirements: Novice

Haunted heroes have a helpful but occasionally frightening spirit companion. Perhaps the ghost is the protective brother who didn't survive the stand at the Marne. Or maybe the apparition of some long-dead warrior manifests to relive the glory of his past military deeds through his descendant.

On taking this Edge, first decide on the specter's origin and write out enough backstory that the War Master knows how to play it. The spirit then grants your hero one of the abilities below (your choice). Future advances may add additional abilities.

The space between worlds is difficult for the phantom, so it never communicates directly. Instead it takes over equipment, tunes in odd radio messages, or scratches warnings in dirt or in the fog of a window. A spirit with the Danger

Sense ability, for example, might make your warrior trip and fall into a shell crater just before a French machine gun rips up the battlefield.

Beast Ward: Animals instantly sense Haunted characters. Hostile animals focus on them where possible, but attack at -2. Roll a die with domesticated creatures. On an even number the animal can be handled (ridden, etc.) at a -2 penalty. Odd, the animal attacks savagely or refuses to be handled.

Backlash: Unfortunately, the link with the phantom can occasionally have terrifying results. Whenever the character suffers a Fatigue level or wound that isn't soaked, he momentarily glimpses the dark things lurking in the spirit world and must make a Spirit roll. If the roll is failed, he loses a Sanity point (2 with a critical failure) and is Shaken (this cannot cause a wound).

Haunted Abilities: Choose one of the abilities below at character creation. You may add additional abilities with advances.

- *Arcane Resistance:* Per the Edge. Taking this ability a second time grants the hero Improved Arcane Resistance. The ability typically manifests as a spectral aura about the host.
- *Channeling:* The spirit channels its previous abilities into its host, perhaps whispering near-insane ramblings in his mind or ear. Once per session, and for the duration of a scene or encounter, the specter grants the character a +4 bonus to any non-combat skill the War Master believes would have been known by the spirit. Thus the ghost of a thief might give its host a bonus to Lockpicking, while a Civil War cavalry officer might aid Riding.
- *Danger Sense:* Per the Edge. The ghost communicates in eerie and mysterious ways. Perhaps it flashes horrible visions of the coming carnage, or drops a cold spot on the host. If the character has Danger Sense on his own, this ability grants two chances to detect ambushes or other unseen attacks.
- *Fear:* Anyone who attacks the host in close combat gets a glimpse of the angry spirit that protects him and must make a Fear test. Once passed, the test need not be made again.
- *Guardian Angel:* The spirit grants the character an extra Benny per session that can only be used to soak damage.
- *Poltergeist:* The spirit spends a great amount of energy to affect dozens of small objects in a Large Burst Template within sight of the host. Foes within must make a Spirit test or be Shaken unless they have a personal Armor value of 4 or more. The exhausted spirit cannot act again for 24 hours afterward.

- *Possession*: By spending a Benny and taking a Fatigue level for 24 hours, the host can send the specter to possess a human target in line of sight. The victim is under the control of the spirit until it breaks free (Spirit roll at -2 each round). This doesn't change the nature of the ghost—it's still a distant, angry spirit with few cogent thoughts—but it can make its host perform basic tasks such as giving orders in his own language, attack, or operate machinery. The host will never deliberately commit suicide.
- *Reaper Ward*: As the host lies dying, the spirit fights off the swirling reapers that would come to claim his soul. Roll a die. If the result is odd, the spirit loses and is torn asunder along with the host's soul. If the die is even, the protective spirit wins the fight and the hero lives, though he is Incapacitated.
- *Séance*: The spirit can speak with other dead souls and attempt to gain information from them. With serious effort (total concentration and a Fatigue level lasting 24 hours) and contact with a corpse, a character can force the specter to concentrate enough to speak with the corpse's spirit and ask a single question. The spirit answers only what it knows, and even this is often vague. A dead soldier might know he was shot by a German, for example, but wouldn't know the soldier's name unless he or his companions spoke it in the body's presence. This information manifests in brief but terrifying visions in the host's mind, causing a Fear test at -2.
- *Vehicular Animation*: The spirit enters the machinery of a vehicle and imbues it with

supernatural energy. All crewmen add +2 to any vehicular actions (including firing its weapons), and attacks against it suffer a -2 penalty. This occurs one round after combat rounds begin and lasts until the War Master declares the game is no longer in rounds. The ability covers an entire vehicle, even an entire ship and all its crew, if directed. This exhausts the spirit, which can take no other action for 24 hours.

Spiritualist

Requirements: Novice, Arcane Background (Magic or Miracles)

Spiritualism began in the 1840s, with the Fox sisters of Rochester, New York demonstrating the ability to talk with spirits and get answers in the form of mysterious rapping noises. Though the Fox girls later confessed they were making the noises with their toe joints, others flocked to investigate the "new science" of spiritualism.

Spiritualist powers derive from sensing and communicating with spirits, chiefly those of the dead. With the the war, there is no shortage of corpses with which to communicate.

Spiritualists add +2 to Faith rolls when invoking the *banish*, *dionination*, *grave speak*, or *spirit shield* miracles. (See Chapter Six for descriptions of the new powers.)

In addition, when conducting a *séance* (via the *grave speak* power), the spirit may not lie. If it doesn't wish to answer for some reason, the caster must win a contest of Persuasion versus Spirit (adding +2 for this Edge). This consumes one of the spell's rounds of questioning, whether it's successful or not.





Chapter Two: Setting Rules

This chapter contains additional rules for common situations in *Weird War I* campaigns: how heroes get medals and promotions, how they call in artillery or air support, how certain environmental factors work, and other rules unique to the setting.

Awards and Medals

The Great War sees a massive increase in how many medals were given out to soldiers. At the start, medals are rare, but the sheer scale and length of the conflict means more men do heroic things, and the warring governments discover the effectiveness of medals as a tool to keep up morale. Note that most European armies have different medals for officers and enlisted men.

Conspicuous acts of bravery can earn medals for player characters. These in turn can lead to promotions. To get recognized, a soldier's commander must put in a request for an award. This happens between missions, and it usually takes a week or so for the paperwork to clear headquarters. After any mission in which the Commanding Officer cites the hero for bravery, the hero's player rolls 1d20 on the **Medal Table** and adds the following modifiers.

Medal Modifiers

Modifier	Circumstance
+X	CO's Charisma modifier
+1	If CO is military rank O-4 or higher
-2	If CO is NCO or other enlisted man
-2	Routine mission
-4	The leader put in for another medal recently (WM's call on what's "recent," but usually within the last 1-2 missions)
+2	Difficult mission
+2	Character was wounded by enemy

Promotions

To advance in military rank, a soldier needs a promotion. Promotions mean higher pay and status, but also increased responsibility. A private doesn't have to worry about anyone but himself and his squad. A captain gets nicer quarters and higher pay, but is responsible for a company of men, equipment, and their performance in action.

At the completion of a mission in which the squad leader recommends the soldier's performance, each player rolls a d20 and adds or subtracts the modifiers below. Modifiers are cumulative. A total of 20 or better means the character gets promoted one military rank.

See the **Rank Tables** in Chapters Four and Five for national rank structures.

Promotion Modifiers

Modifier	Circumstance
-2	Routine mission
+2	Difficult mission
-2	Character is rank O-3 or higher
+1	Character is a Private
+1	Character has the Upper Class Edge
+2	Character displays great heroism or good judgment during the mission

Common Ordnance

Both sides in the Great War use very similar weaponry. In some cases, actually the same model from the same manufacturer! The table on page 30 gives statistics for some of the most common heavy weapons.

Medal Table

d20	Promotion Bonus	Austria	Belgium	France
1–12	0	Medal for Bravery	War Cross	—
13–15	+1	Medal for Merit/Merit Cross	Military Decoration	Medal of Honor
16–19	+2	Order of the Iron Crown	Order of Leopold II	War Cross
20–23	+2	Order of Leopold	Order of the Crown	Military Medal
24+	+4	Order of Maria Theresa	Order of Leopold	Legion of Honor
d20	Promotion Bonus	Germany	Italy	Russia
1–12	0	War Merit Cross	War Merit Cross	St. Anne Medal
13–15	+1	Iron Cross (second class)	Bronze Medal for Military Valor	St. George Medal
16–19	+2	Iron Cross (first class)	Silver Medal for Military Valor	Cross of St. George
20–23	+2	Order of the Red Eagle	Gold Medal for Military Valor	Order of St. Anne
24+	+4	Blue Max/Merit Cross	Military Order of Savoy	Order of St. George
d20	Promotion Bonus	Turkey	United Kingdom	United States
1–12	0	War Medal	Military Medal	—
13–15	+1	Liyakat Medal	Military Cross	—
16–19	+2	Imtiyaz Medal	Distinguished Conduct Medal	Purple Heart
20–23	+2	Mejidie Order	Distinguished Service Order	Certificate of Merit
24+	+4	Osmanie Order	Victoria Cross	Medal of Honor

* The Promotion Bonus is a one-time bonus to the Promotion roll made after the mission on which the Hero won the award.

Common Ordnance Table

Field Artillery

Size	Range	Damage	Burst	Notes
65–87mm (3")	5 miles	4d8	Med	AP 4, Heavy Weapon; French 75mm, British 8-pounder
100–105mm (4")	6 miles	5d8	Med	AP 5, Heavy Weapon; German 10cm, French 105mm
150–155mm (6")	5 miles	6d10	Large	AP 15, Heavy Weapon; British 6", US 155mm

Bombs

Size	Range	Damage	Burst	Notes
25-pound	—	4d8	Med	AP 8, Heavy Weapon
50-pound	—	6d8	Med	AP 12, Heavy Weapon
100-pound	—	5d10	Large	AP 16, Heavy Weapon

Naval Guns

Size	Range	Damage	Burst	Notes
4–5"	4/8/12	5d10	Large	AP 20, Heavy Weapon
6"	6/12/18	6d10	Large	AP 30, Heavy Weapon
8–10"	6/12/19	4d12	Large	AP 40, Heavy Weapon
12"	7/14/20	5d12	Large	AP 45, Heavy Weapon

Trenches and Fortifications

The Great War was a war of fortifications. Once the Allies pushed back the first German offensive, both sides dug in, then spent the rest of the war expanding and improving their trench lines. Because the German Army had the luxury of choosing its stop lines during the first withdrawal, they were able to select superior defensive positions.

If a soldier walked casually toward the enemy lines, and didn't mind getting riddled with bullets, here's what he would encounter:

First, "No Man's Land," the space between the lines. In some sectors this was only a few hundred yards wide, but typically it was a thousand yards or more. Anyone wandering around in No Man's Land was prey to snipers. In the first years of the war the Germans had a large number of skilled marksmen who controlled the space between the lines. Later, the British and French were able to match them.

Frequent artillery barrages meant that No Man's Land in France and Belgium was pockmarked with craters that were often filled with stagnant water.

Wire: The outermost defensive line was barbed wire (see page 36). Parties of engineers would sneak out under cover of darkness to put up new wire, either in big coils or pre-attached to posts. Wire can't stop soldiers but it can slow them down, and soldiers caught out in the open quickly become dead men.

Fire Trench: About 50–100 yards behind the wire was the first trench line, called the "fire trench." This wasn't just a simple ditch. The line zigzagged every 10–20 feet so that a single bursting shell or enemy raid couldn't sweep a whole section of the line. There was typically a low parapet in front made of sandbags. From the front, the fire trench provides Near Total Cover, for a -6 penalty on attacks. Attacks from the rear are at -4.

Trenches varied depending on the local earth. In Belgium, the wet soil meant that deep trenches simply flooded, so troops built breastworks of sandbags. Northern France's soil had good drainage so the soldiers dug deep, creating trenches six or seven feet deep, with a parapet of sandbags for extra protection. The rocky terrain of the Alps made trenches almost impossible, so Italian and Austrian troops used natural features and plenty of sandbags.

British troops survey No Man's Land with the aid of a mirror on a bayonet.





Different armies had different construction styles. The British put up wooden retaining walls inside their trenches, and “duck boards” to keep their feet clear of mud. However, the British command discouraged digging shelters in the fire trench because it was thought to work against the “offensive spirit” they wanted to encourage. Troops did scrape out small dugouts inside the front side of the trenches, braced with sandbags and timbers.

French trenches were less elaborately engineered but placed a higher premium on shelter for the men. British soldiers complained that French lines were muddy, but the French did build more elaborate shelters.

The German trenches were very elaborate. They made heavy use of concrete, creating impregnable shelters sometimes 60 feet underground. The Germans picked the best positions, so their fire trench line usually ran along the high ground, with a great field of view down toward enemy positions. Shelters were out of sight of the enemy on the reverse slope.

Every 50–100 yards along the front line were machine-gun nests, positioned so their fields of fire overlapped. Taking out one machine gun wouldn’t open a gap in the killing zone.

Covering Trench: Angled “communication trenches” connected the front line with a second “covering trench” 100 to 200 yards back. This second line was just as much a combat position as the front trench, and had even more machine-gun emplacements. Troops in the covering trench could stop breakthroughs and respond quickly to emergencies. Shelters in the covering trench held command posts, cookhouses, latrines, medical aid stations, and supply caches. Like the fire trench, the covering trench provides Near Total Cover, for a –6 penalty to attacks.

Second Line: Behind the covering trench was a zone about 1–3 miles deep, studded with machine-gun positions, fortified blockhouses, and more lines of barbed wire. Behind that was another entire double trench line just like the first, as a fall-back position in case the enemy breached the front. This second line was safer than the first, but had little more in the way of creature comforts, and was still in reach of enemy artillery.

Rear Areas: Well back, another mile or more behind the second line, were the heavy artillery positions. Roads and rail lines stretched back from there to safe rear areas with mess halls, showers, barracks with cots, and field hospitals. Units were camped here, rotating to the front lines

for one to two weeks before rotating back to the support or reserve areas. The rear also held supply depots, communication centers, and divisional headquarters. And behind that, rather abruptly, the war zone ended and civilian life went on much as before.

Supply

Parties often include a great many supporting Extras. It's difficult to track ammo and food for every single nonplayer person in a unit, so use this simplified system. Player characters should track their ammo normally.

The character in charge of a team of Extras keeps track of Ammo and Rations for the group, whether it's a squad, platoon, company, etc. If there's a medic player character in the party, he keeps track of the group's Medical Supplies.

Ammunition: Each group of Extras starts with an Ammo Level of either Very High, High (typical), Low, or Out. You'll find a Supply Track on the Ally Sheet to help you keep up.

When a Joker comes up in combat (regardless of who drew it), roll a die immediately. If it's even, ammo status doesn't change. If it's odd, ammo drops a level. Once the team is "Out," roll a further die for each Extra every time he wants to fire his weapon. If the roll is even, he's scrounged up a round somewhere. Otherwise he can't fire that action (but can try again next action when he "finds" some ammo). A team that's out of ammo is also out of grenades, mortar rounds, and other special munitions they might normally carry.

Players can give ammo to Extras in a pinch and track them normally, but in general, use the quick and easy system we've outlined here.

Rations: Food and water are tracked differently. In a base or in the fixed trench lines, troops get food through normal logistic channels. If their position is cut off or surrounded, assume each man has a day of extra food and water stashed away. When operating away from a base or the trench line, troops carry a number of days' worth of food and water. Rations weigh 6 pounds per day, and a day's worth of water weighs 2 pounds. In assault missions the men typically carry food and water for two days. Missions in colonial territories require more elaborate logistics, with bearers or pack animals carrying food and water for several weeks.

Mark the number of days' worth of food and water on the Ally Sheet, and tick down a box each day until resupply. When a team is out of food and water, they must make Vigor rolls every day or suffer Fatigue. This can lead to Incapacitation.

Medical Supplies: Medics depend on their medical kits to keep soldiers alive and fighting. When the kit runs dry, the medic's job gets considerably more difficult. A medical kit contains various drugs, supplies, and instruments for treating casualties, and adds +2 to the Healing rolls of anyone who uses it. However, the medic character must keep track of the amount of perishable supplies left in the kit. Each kit starts with 10 points of drugs, bandages, and other non-reusable items. Every use subtracts 1d4 points' worth of items.

If the medical kit runs out, the medic can still use the instruments and non-expendables inside, but does not gain the +2 bonus to Healing rolls. The kit does still negate the usual penalty for having no medical tools at all.

Medical kits can be refilled to full at any well-stocked field hospital or dressing station, and fresh kits are sent up to the front lines along with food and ammo. Other sources (civilian clinics, villages, and so on) can be looted for 1d6 points' worth of supplies. Medics can also scrounge supplies from used medical kits, with four "empty" kits providing enough supplies for one complete refill. There is no difficulty using enemy medical kits.

Aerial Re-supply: During the 1917 and 1918 offensives units occasionally became cut off by enemy forces but held on in strong positions. Pilots tried to drop emergency supplies, especially ammunition, medical kits, and chocolate. Assume it takes 1d6 days for high command to realize what's going on and organize an air drop. A bomber or a flight of fighters can drop 200 lbs. of supplies—20 man-days of food, water, and ammo. The War Master should roll a d6 Piloting skill check to see if the gear gets dropped on the right target. If the pilot fails, the hungry troops may have to watch the enemy enjoy their precious supplies.

Movement

Soldiers in *Weird War I* move around by train. And then they march. German soldiers in the opening phases of the war marched from Germany to the outskirts of Paris.

Most people can walk 10 miles per day on a clear road without undue exertion. Infantry often make forced marches of 20 miles or more, while carrying up to 60 pounds of equipment. Soldiers can march eight hours a day. Each hour a soldier marches beyond the standard eight, characters must make a Vigor roll. Failure adds a level of Fatigue.

Vehicles don't get tired, of course. But when military vehicles are moving together they seldom travel at top speed, since a column can only go as fast as the slowest unit. In combat, vehicles typically move at about ¼ of top speed, and when supporting infantry they typically move at the speed of a trotting soldier. When you consider the effects of weather and the lack of improved roads in 1914, you understand why infantry just marched.

Battlefield Hazards

The battlefields of the Great War, especially on the Western and Alpine fronts, are deadly places. Here are some of the hazards heroes encounter.

Barrages

As the war settles into static trench warfare and the armies dig in, artillery plays an increasingly important role on the battlefield. The prewar light guns firing shrapnel against troops in the open give way to heavy-caliber guns firing high explosive shells that can damage trenches and kill those covering within. In turn, the poor bloody infantry digs deeper and more elaborate trenches. Pre-war artillery shell consumption estimates go out the window, and production ramps up on the home front to provide an unimaginable amount of ammunition for the front lines. Barrages lasting days and comprising millions of shells fired from thousands of guns became commonplace before

troops went over the top. While not terribly effective at cutting wire or dislodging troops from their trenches, artillery still caused many more casualties than any other weapon on the battlefield.

Troops on the receiving end of an artillery barrage must survive a number of rounds. A short, whirlwind barrage might only be two rounds, while one of the multiday barrages lasts up to five rounds.

Each round, every hero rolls to determine if they are injured by the artillery barrage, with a roll of 1 indicating that they take 2d8 damage. The base die rolled is a d6, which is modified by several factors. All modifiers are cumulative, but the die can't drop below d4.

Artillery Modifiers

Trench Type	Modifier
No trenches	None
British/Russian trenches	+1 die type
French trenches	+2 die types
German trenches	+3 die types
Artillery Barrage	Modifier
Light artillery	None
Medium artillery	-1 die type
Heavy artillery	-2 die types
Mortars	-3 die types
Terrain	Modifier
Forest	-1 die type
Ravines/gullies	+1 die type
Swamp/snow	+1 die type

A machine-gun crew prepares to douse the enemy in hot lead.



Disease

Though medical care in the Great War is far better than any previous conflict, disease still takes a heavy toll. Trenches in the damp soil of northern France are an extremely unhealthy environment, and sanitary arrangements are primitive.

Depending on conditions, characters must make Vigor rolls to avoid getting sick. In a base in the rear, with proper facilities, roll only once per month. In a muddy trench at the front, roll every day.

Diseases vary depending on where the characters are operating. Malaria is a mosquito-borne disease which appears year-round in the tropics. Dysentery and cholera are very common in military or refugee camps. Sepsis is a dangerous infection which may occur when characters are wounded.

In jungle conditions even small cuts and scrapes can turn septic. Trench foot (also known as “jungle rot”) is caused by constant dampness. The skin on the feet dies and peels off in layers. Infection may set in. The simplest treatment is dry socks and boots, which are hard to come by in the mud of Flanders. And in 1918 the killer Spanish influenza appears...

Sick characters must make a Vigor roll to recover, made at intervals depending on the disease. On a failed roll, the patient's Vigor drops one step. Soldiers without proper medical care have a -2 Vigor penalty on the recovery roll. If Vigor drops below d4, the patient dies (or loses a limb in the case of trench foot).

If the recovery roll succeeds, the patient recovers any lost Vigor in 1d4 days.

The diseases listed below are common in the Great War. Listings show the symptoms, cause, and the interval at which patients make a Vigor roll to recover.

- **Dysentery**—**Symptoms:** diarrhea, dehydration, stomach pain, fever; **Vector:** ingested (contaminated water); **Vigor Roll:** weekly.
- **Cholera**—**Symptoms:** diarrhea, dehydration, vomiting; **Vector:** ingested (contaminated water); **Vigor Roll:** 5 days.
- **Influenza**—**Symptoms:** high fever, muscle pain, weakness; **Vector:** airborne or contact (infected humans); **Vigor Roll:** 3 days (-2 Vigor penalty for all patients).
- **Typhus**—**Symptoms:** fever, headache, skin rash; **Vector:** contact (rats, lice); **Vigor Roll:** weekly.
- **Sepsis**—**Symptoms:** inflammation, infection, shock; **Vector:** injury; **Vigor Roll:** 8 hours.
- **Trench Foot**—**Symptoms:** inflammation, skin rash; **Vector:** exposure (damp); **Vigor Roll:** 3 days.

Gas

World War I saw the first large-scale use of poison gas on the battlefield and the idea of poisoning the very air made gas warfare seem uniquely horrible. The first gas attacks used tear-gas grenades, and shells and were ineffective.

In January 1915 the German Army began using chlorine gas, and the British and French quickly followed suit. As the war dragged on, the armies deployed newer and deadlier gases including phosgene and mustard gas.

Gas is spread using either gas shells or by spraying from cylinders. Shells fill a Large Burst Template around the impact point. Cylinders are used for massive attacks, with hundreds of them flooding an area miles long. With a following breeze, the gas from one cylinder spreads in a cloud 10 yards wide and 1d6 × 100 yards deep.

Characters exposed to gas must make a Vigor roll each round they remain within the area of effect. Subtract the modifier for the gas' strength listed below. Failure causes a level of Fatigue, and can lead to death (except for Tear Gas). A critical failure permanently reduces Vigor one level.

Gas Masks: Early gas masks add +1 to the character's rolls, later ones +2.

Morale: Soldiers in a gas attack must make a Fear test, with a -2 penalty if the individual has never faced gas before.

Gas Strengths

Gas	Penalty
Chlorine	-1
Mustard Gas	-2. Gas capes add an additional +1 protection as the mustard gas is a contact irritant as well.
Phosgene	-3
Tear Gas	—

Heavy Fire

Both sides constantly sweep No Man's Land with artillery and machine-guns. Soldiers must cross these battlefields under terrible fire, even if they're not directly in combat. This could be when they're pursuing a specific objective in a larger battle, or when a medic has to rescue an injured man.

In these cases, the War Master breaks up the action into “sprints,” a run from one area of cover to another. This might be a few seconds running across open country in full daylight, or several minutes during the night or in bad weather. During the sprint, roll a d6 for each character. On a 1, he's hit by a random shot or blast for 2d8 damage.

Heavy Forest

Forest or wooded areas in Europe impose no penalties or restrictions to movement and combat for infantry. The dense jungles of Africa or parts of Latin America are thick enough to halve movement on foot as soldiers have to cut a path, and give every combatant the equivalent of Light Cover.

Forest provides visual cover and protection from small arms fire, but not artillery. Soldiers caught in an artillery barrage in a wood or forest are subject to rounds bursting in the canopy, known as "treebursts." Shell explosions in the treetops reduce the cover by one level and cause an additional +1d6 damage as wood splinters rain on soldiers in the area of effect.

Thickly wooded areas like the Ardennes Forest can also create strange sound effects, such as delays, echoes, noises carrying across unusually long distances, or muffling (especially when there's snow on the ground). As a general rule, Notice rolls made in heavy woods suffer a -2 penalty.

Driving a vehicle in a forest requires a Driving roll every minute, or every round if in combat. Failure means the vehicle makes no real progress. Critical failure means the vehicle is actually stuck or damaged (the axle gets caught on tree roots, the vehicle is wedged between trees, etc.). Exactly how this manifests is up to the War Master, but should require 1d10 × 30 minutes of work with a Repair roll (half with a raise). Failure means the vehicle requires extensive repairs (it must be towed, needs a new axle, etc.).

Riding in woods isn't as difficult because horses won't voluntarily crash into trees. Make a Riding roll every five minutes, or every other round if in combat. Failure means the mount turns aside or hesitates, making no progress. On a critical failure, roll a die. Even means the rider runs into low-hanging branches and must make a quick Agility roll to avoid getting hit for 1d6 damage. Odd means the mount has stumbled and is Shaken.

Minefields

Both the Allies and the Central Powers deploy mines during the Great War. Land mines are anti-personnel mines, although heavier anti-tank mines appear shortly after the first use of tanks on the battlefield. Mines are often buried in the ground but can be set on the surface depending on the type and intended target. Anti-tank mines require several hundred pounds of pressure to detonate, meaning infantry can pass over them with little fear.

When moving through a minefield, roll 1d6, for each character, for every 1" (two yards) she moves. On a 1, the character has encountered a mine and must make an immediate Notice roll. If the roll is failed, he's triggered the mine and suffers the damage. If the roll is successful, he's successfully avoided it. Subtract 2 from the Notice roll if the character is moving at full Pace. Running characters get no Notice roll—good luck!

AP mines cause 2d6+2 damage in a Small Burst Template. Early anti-tank mines cause 4d6 damage, Small Burst Template, AP 4 vs half the tank's lowest armor (it's bottom armor).

Wire

Barbed wire was one of the icons of the Great War. It was easy to set up and could slow troop movements in open ground, but gave them no cover from deadly machine-gun fire.

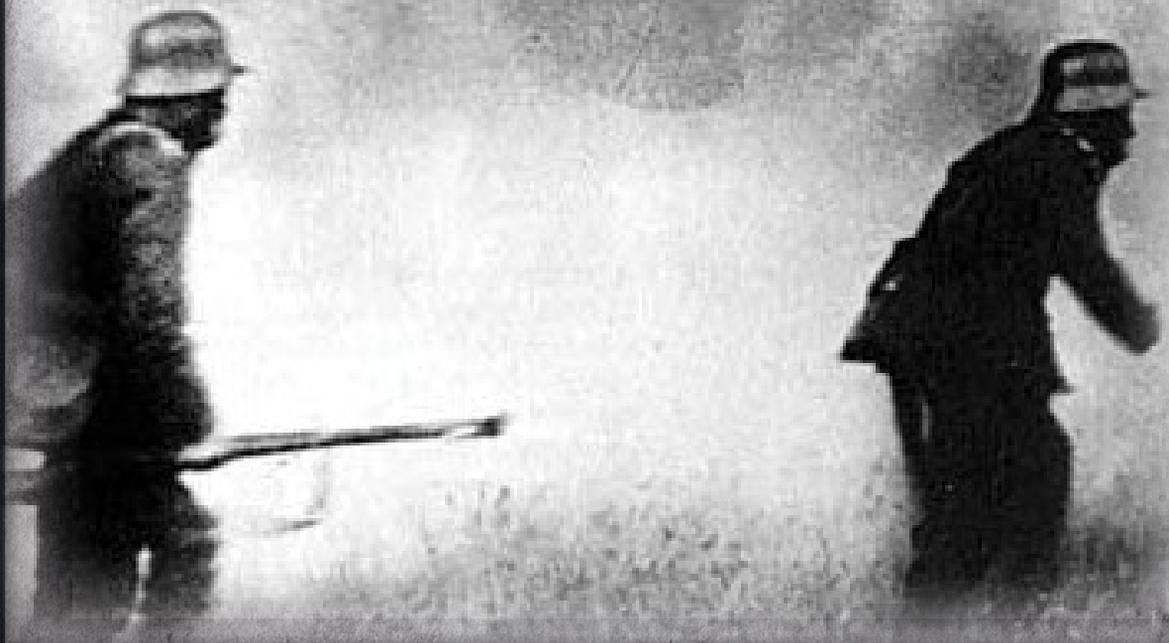
Barbed or razor wire can be strung between posts to form fences, but the easiest way to deploy wire on the battlefield is to use coils. Wire can also be strung about in a haphazard way forming a thicket (this often happens to "orphaned" wire in abandoned positions out on the battlefield).

It's possible to crawl through a wire obstacle but not quickly. Troops moving through wire cautiously can only move 1" per round if they make an Agility roll. Those rushing through it suffer a -2 penalty. A roll of 1 on the Agility die means the character is truly entangled. He suffers a Fatigue level from all the cuts and punctures, and further attempts to get free take 1d6 × 10 minutes. Wire cutters add +1 to the Agility rolls and cut away a space 1" (two yards) wide and deep per round. This leaves a clear trail for those following behind.

Both sides try to blast away enemy wire with artillery barrages; it doesn't work. Exploding shells don't cut the steel wire, and the blast just churns it into a horrible tangle.



German soldiers advance through deadly gas clouds to attack the enemy.



Sanity

The Great War unleashed a variety of threats to sanity. The gore of the battlefield, the stress of being under artillery attack for hours or days, and the mounting awareness that sooner or later *that bullet* will find you can undermine a soldier's stability. Add the uncanny encounters in *Weird Wars* and even the toughest-minded characters can break.

To keep track of mental strain, each Wild Card character has a Sanity statistic. A soldier's starting Sanity is 2 plus half his Spirit die type (unless modified by Edges or Hindrances).

Losing Sanity

Uncanny sights and cosmic horror can send characters spiraling into madness. Any time a character fails a Fear test, he loses one point of Sanity. On a critical failure, he loses two Sanity points.

Recovery

The best way to recover lost Sanity is to spend time in a non-stressful situation. This means a week away from the front lines with nobody shooting at you. Defeating uncanny horrors can also restore a hero's stability. Finally, characters can simply get used to the weirdness: If a hero doesn't lose any Sanity for two months, he regains 1 point of lost Sanity. The **Sanity Recovery Table** lists ways to undo the shock of the *Weird War*. Sanity can never be raised above its derived value of 2 plus half Spirit.

Sanity Recovery Table

Event	Recovery
A week in safe surroundings	+1
Three days at home	+1
Defeating supernatural horror	+1
Two "sane" months	+1



Nervous Cases

When a character loses too much Sanity, he gets twitchy and peculiar. Without treatment, he can become totally deranged. Any character with a Sanity of 2 or less is noticeably odd. Other soldiers react poorly to him, especially if he's giving them orders. The player should choose a Hindrance to play until the character's Sanity rises to 3 or more.

When a character's Sanity drops to 0, he is genuinely insane and must roll on the **Insanity Table**. Some results have game effects while others should be roleplayed. Sanity cannot drop below 0. When a character with Sanity 0 loses another Sanity point, his Sanity remains 0 but he automatically rolls again on the **Insanity Table**.

Recovering from this erosion of mental stability is hard. The methods listed in the **Sanity Recovery Table** no longer have any effect. An insane individual needs actual treatment by an "alienist" or psychiatrist. For each week spent under the care of a mental specialist, the patient can make a Smarts roll. If it succeeds he can remove one of the conditions from the **Insanity Table**. If he has already removed all his conditions, he regains a point of Sanity instead.

Shell-Shock

The Great Powers used massive artillery barrages as they tried to smash through the enemy's fortified lines. Bombardments could go on for days, using millions of shells. Troops under the hammer suffered physically and mentally.

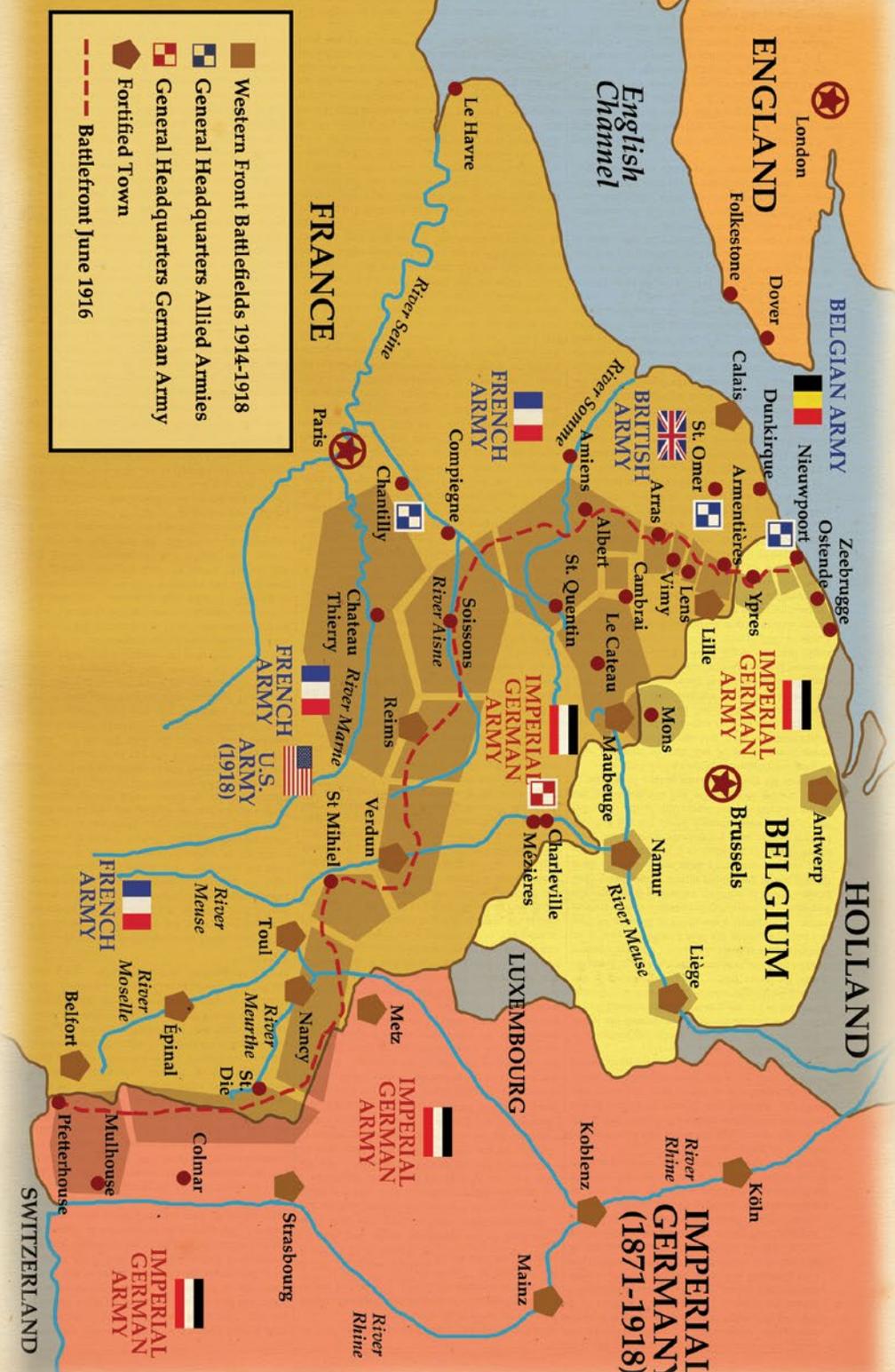
For each hour under heavy artillery bombardment, soldiers must make a Spirit roll to avoid suffering shell-shock (not to be confused with the Hindrance of the same name). On a failed roll they gain a level of Fatigue. Additional failures increase Fatigue, but the character can never be worse than Incapacitated. When the bombardment ends, characters recover from their shell-shock-induced Fatigue by making a Spirit roll for every hour spent in quiet, non-stressful surroundings.

Each shell-shock episode costs the soldier 1 point of Sanity. If shell-shock drives a character insane, he automatically gains the Shell Shocked Hindrance instead of rolling on the **Insanity Table**. (Make subsequent rolls normally.)

Insanity Table

d20	Result
1-3	Superstitious: Your character has found some kind of token or belief which helps him deal with the terrors he faces. It can be religious faith, a lucky charm, or some sort of personal ritual he believes will protect him. Pick a simple routine or object to be the focus of this disorder. As long as it is undisturbed, the patient can function normally. If it gets lost or disturbed (losing the token, failing to say prayers, etc.) all your character's Trait rolls are at a -1 penalty for the rest of the mission.
4-6	Thousand-Yard Stare: Your character has a blank, detached look on his face all the time, as if he still sees whatever pushed his mind over the edge. All Notice rolls get a -2 penalty.
7-8	Flashbacks: In stressful situations your character is overwhelmed by images of past battles and dead comrades. In combat, images flash through his mind, confusing the past with reality. A character having a flashback draws two Action Cards per round and acts on the worst of the two. Heroes with the Level Headed Edge draw just one card. Flashbacks can be brought under control for the current battle by a Spirit check at -4.
9-10	Distant: Your soldier has seen all his comrades die and has no desire to make new connections with men who are surely doomed as well. He's gloomy and doesn't talk much, and gets a -4 Charisma penalty.
11-12	Night Terrors: Dreams of past terrors torment this doughboy. He can't sleep properly without some kind of sedative, probably alcohol. He's permanently tired. When it is important to sleep, a failed Vigor roll (-2) means this character cannot.
13-14	Addiction: Your character makes the pain go away by drinking, taking pills, or injecting morphine. The American and British armies try to keep booze away from the front lines, but the French and Russians make sure their fighting men get wine and vodka. German and Austrian soldiers get a beer ration. Morphine and cocaine are not hard to find behind the lines. The character gains a Major Habit Hindrance.
15-16	The Shakes: Your character trembles uncontrollably in any stressful situation. During combat (or any time the War Master decides things are too intense) the warrior's hands start shaking, reducing all Agility and Agility-related skill rolls by -2.
17-18	Paranoia: Your fighter has seen too much official deception and cover-ups to trust anyone anymore. He has realized there is some monstrous secret behind it all (Jews, Freemasons, arms merchants, and revolutionists are favorite targets). The character tries to fit everything into his new worldview. Gain the Delusional (Major) Hindrance, and a -2 penalty to Charisma because of his suspicions.
19-20	Blood Lust: Your character has started to enjoy the horror. He gains the Bloodthirsty Hindrance, but with a slight difference. If he isn't able to kill someone in hand-to-hand combat every seven days, he becomes dangerously mean until his bloodlust is sated. The -4 Charisma penalty still applies, although characters who don't see his mean side may be impressed by his "fighting spirit."

	Western Front Battlefields 1914-1918
	General Headquarters Allied Armies
	General Headquarters German Army
	Fortified Town
	Battlefront June 1916



EASTERN FRONT 1914-18
 Farthest Russian Advance 1914
 Gallipoli Campaign 1915
 Front at time of Russian Revolution 1917
 Farthest Austro-Germanic Advance 1918





Chapter Three: The Great War

Origins of the Great War

"The lamps are going out all over Europe. We shall not see them lit again in our time."

—Sir Edward Grey,

British Foreign Secretary, August 1914

Archduke Franz Ferdinand was the nephew of Franz Josef I, ruler of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. He was heir to the throne, popular, and reform-minded. In the summer of 1914 he toured the Balkan province of Bosnia-Herzegovina, annexed by the Empire after it broke away from Turkish rule in 1878. The Archduke hoped to reconcile Bosnians to Austrian rule.

But on June 28, 1914, a Slavic nationalist named Gavrilo Princip murdered Franz Ferdinand and his wife as they drove through Sarajevo. Princip belonged to a political secret society sponsored by Serbia's secret service, which opposed Austrian rule in the region. Enraged, the Austrians demanded that Serbia allow them to act against the leaders of the plot in Serbia, even though some were government officials.

The Serbs refused, and appealed to their powerful ally Russia for protection. Austria in turn asked its ally Germany for help against Russia. Russia and France had recently signed a treaty of alliance against Germany, which meant that if Germany attacked Russia, France would attack Germany. Diplomatic efforts to ease the crisis failed, and on July 28 Austria invaded Serbia. The dominoes started to fall.

Germany's leaders had no desire to fight Russia and France at once, so their war plan, devised by Count Alfred von Schlieffen in 1905, called for a holding action in the east and a quick "knockout

blow" against France in the west. Once France was down, Germany's full strength could turn against Russia. In order to encircle and cut off the French army, the main German force marched through Belgium.

Belgium, however, was neutral. Rather than let his country be used as an invasion highway, King Albert of Belgium led his tiny army against the Germans. The outcome was never in doubt, but Belgian resistance slowed the German advance by three crucial weeks, giving the French more time to mobilize and prepare.

The invasion of Belgium brought the United Kingdom into the conflict. Great Britain was pledged to defend Belgian neutrality—and had no desire to see German navy bases just across the English Channel. The 75,000-man British Expeditionary Force deployed to France.

Ottoman Turkey was not tied by treaty to either side, but had a longstanding relationship with Germany. When the British seized warships ordered by Turkey from British shipbuilders for their own navy's use, and then chased a German squadron into the harbor of Istanbul, the Turkish government decided to throw in with Germany. Meanwhile in eastern Asia, Japan honored its treaty of alliance with the British by snapping up German-owned islands and territories in China.

The empires of Europe ruled half of the Earth's surface. When they went to war their colonies followed, so by 1915 most of the planet was involved. Only the United States and the republics of Latin America were not involved. At least, not at first...

Chronology of the War

1914

The Gray Tidal Wave

The German army marches into Belgium on August 4, 1914. They encounter their first major obstacle at the fortified city of Liege. Special heavy artillery batters the forts around Liege into rubble, and the Germans press onward.

The French open the war with an attack eastward to reclaim the German-held provinces of Alsace and Lorraine. They gain ground at heavy cost, but a German counteroffensive pushes them back into France after two weeks. In the north, the main French force crashes head-on into the attacking Germans and is thrown back. The British Expeditionary Force under Sir John French lands in Belgium and tries to hold onto the French flank, but eventually must fall back or risk getting separated from the French.

Miracle of the Marne

The Germans force the Allies back to the outskirts of Paris by September 12, but the goal is to surround and destroy the French army rather than capture the capital. When the German army turns east, General Gallieni, the French commander at Paris, sees his chance. Using everything at hand to move men, including all of the taxicabs in Paris, the French and British counterattack the German flank at the Marne River.

The Schlieffen Plan has failed, and the Germans pull back to a strong defensive line curving across northern France from Switzerland to the sea. Behind that line are some of France's most important industrial areas and all but a tiny sliver of Belgium. The Allies dig in as well, and both sides try to figure out what to do next.

Victory at Tannenberg

In the east, the Germans surprise themselves. The Germans assumed that gigantic Russia with its large population and vast spaces would be the tougher opponent. The plan had been to fight a holding action against the Russians in eastern Germany until France was knocked out. At that point Germany could throw its whole force against Russia, or possibly bring the Tsar to the negotiating table.

But at the battle of Tannenberg the German force destroys a Russian army more than twice its size, and mauls a second Russian army two weeks later at the Masurian Lakes. The Russians pull back deep into Russian-controlled Poland and try to regroup. For the moment, Germany is victorious in the east. General Hindenburg and his second-in-command General Ludendorff are the heroes of the hour in Berlin.

In the Balkans the Austrian campaign against Serbia is bloody and ineffective. Brutal fighting during the autumn costs both sides about a quarter million men each, but by winter the Serbs recapture Belgrade and things are back where they started.

The War Worldwide

The British make good use of their strategic reach to attack the Central Powers away from the main fronts. They invade the Ottoman Empire



through the Persian Gulf, capturing Basra in November using Indian troops. At the same time the Russians push south through the Caucasus Mountains into Kurdistan but get bloodied by unexpectedly strong Ottoman resistance there.

French and British colonial forces capture the German colony of Togo in Africa during the opening weeks of the war. The larger colony of Kamerun (modern Cameroon) holds out until the following spring, and isolated German garrisons in the interior don't give up for another year. South African troops quickly seize Germany's colony in Southwest Africa (Namibia).

In East Africa, however, the Germans have a substantial force of well-trained African troops led by a shrewd and aggressive commander, Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck. The British send Indian and African troops to capture the German colony but are driven off in November.

War At Sea

During the autumn Australian and New Zealand forces snap up Germany's island colonies in the South Pacific while Japan takes German holdings in China and Micronesia. The German East Asia naval squadron tries to fight its way across the Pacific and back to Kiel, but runs into a British fleet at the Falkland Islands which sinks or captures most of the German ships.

The British fleet blockades Germany and cuts German cable connections with the Americas. The Germans respond with a U-boat blockade of the British isles, but have only a handful of submarines to do the job. The coastal waters off Germany become a deadly maze of minefields.



Stalemate

Both sides sit tight on the Western Front during the first winter, and in the spring of 1915 try new offensives. The British attack at Neuve Chapelle and the French assault Vimy Ridge, trying to recapture the industrial city of Lille and break through the German defensive line. Both are costly failures. The Germans use gas for the first time against the British at Ypres, and blow a hole in the Allied line four miles wide. But they can't exploit it before Canadian troops arrive to plug the gap.

EVERY GIRL PULLING FOR VICTORY



VICTORY GIRLS UNITED WAR WORK CAMPAIGN

The Germans begin Zeppelin attacks on Great Britain. Damage from the raids is minor, but the effect on British morale is significant, and the construction of air defenses diverts resources from the Western Front. British propaganda in neutral America plays up the inhumanity of this new weapon.

One reason for the failures in spring is a crippling shortage of ammunition. War on this scale uses up shells even faster than it uses up men. During the summer the Allies prepare and stockpile ammunition. Then the French launch a new offensive in Champagne, supported by a British attack on the town of Loos in Belgium. Despite bombardments lasting four days and using a quarter-million shells, neither attack can quite break through. As the war's second winter arrives, nothing has changed in the west at all.

Heartbreak at Gallipoli

That April the British land a force of Australian and New Zealand troops on the Gallipoli peninsula in Turkey, at the entrance to the Dardanelles strait. The goal is to open the way to Constantinople, knock the Ottoman Empire out of the war, and allow supplies to reach Russia more easily.

But the Turks under Mustapha Kemal fight back much harder than anyone expected, and pin down the British force. For nine months the

Stretcher bearers prepare to carry a wounded ally out of harm's way.



ANZACs (Australian and New Zealand Army Corps) hang on in their rocky trenches, taking and inflicting heavy casualties without gaining an inch. The Turks try their own offensive against the Suez Canal but the British hold them off.

With the Gallipoli campaign sucking up Turkish reserves, the Russians push south into Armenia while the British advance on Baghdad and sponsor revolts among the Arab tribes under Turkish rule.

Italy Joins In

Italy ends its neutrality by joining the Allies, declaring war on Austria and Germany in May. During the summer and fall the Italian army mounts a series of bloody offensives against the Austrians in the Alps and on the Isonzo River, trying to capture Gorizia and the city of Trieste. None of the assaults budge the line an inch.

The Central Powers Clean House

In the east the Germans and Austrians push the Russian army clear out of Poland. Sheer distance puts an end to the German advance, and they hold a strong line anchored by rivers, marshes, and the Carpathian mountains. The Russians doggedly try to rebuild.

Bulgaria throws in with the Central Powers in the fall, and joins the Austrian attack against Serbia in October. The Serbs collapse, and the remnant of their army withdraws through Albania to Greece. Now the Central Powers have secure interior lines from Constantinople to Berlin and can close down an entire front.

Command of the Seas

The British score some naval victories in the heart of Africa, transporting motor torpedo boats overland to sink German armed steamers on Lake Tanganyika. The Royal Navy also traps and sinks a German cruiser on the coast of East Africa, but her crew and some of her heavy guns join the German garrison. Von Lettow continues to evade the British on land.

At sea, the German U-boat campaign creates a diplomatic disaster when the U-20 sinks the British liner Lusitania off the coast of Ireland, with 128 Americans among the dead. The strong American reaction (fanned by the British) results in the Germans suspending unrestricted submarine warfare. U-boats must surface and demand the surrender of merchant ships rather than sink them without warning.

The Verdun Vortex

With Russia knocked back a thousand miles, the Germans turn their full strength to the west. General von Falkenhayn, the new German commander, decides on a war of attrition. He intends to attack the French fortified city of Verdun, press it hard enough to keep the French from throwing in reinforcements, and pound them to bits. At first the plan works. The French suffer catastrophic losses as they struggle to hold the forts around Verdun. But the French adapt and strike back, and their counterattacks begin to hurt the Germans almost as badly. The French lose half a million in the year-long battle, and the Germans lose 400,000. By the end of the year the offensive closes down with the lines right back where they started.

The British try to take some of the pressure off by attacking the Germans in the Somme valley to the north. After four months of fighting, including massive barrages, air attacks, and the first use of armored tanks, the British manage to shift the lines only five miles. It costs them 600,000 men.

The Fleets Clash

The long-awaited showdown between the German High Seas Fleet and the Royal Navy comes at the end of May off the coast of Jutland in Denmark. The Germans inflict more damage than they suffer, but the Kaiser's fleet ends the battle by running back to port, and the British retain control of the North Sea.

Austria Cotters

In the spring the Austrians manage to outflank the Italian army in the Alps, and nearly break through to the undefended lowlands of northern Italy. The Italians scramble to stop the offensive, and drive the Austrians back at great cost. Later that summer the Italians once again try an attack along the Isonzo River, finally taking Gorizia.

In the summer of 1916 the Russians launch a new offensive against the Austrians, and make impressive gains. They take hundreds of thousands of prisoners and advance forty miles. But the Germans throw reinforcements into the fight to prop up the tottering Austrians, and stop the Russians cold. When the fighting ends the Russians have lost more than a million men, the Germans and Austrians three quarters of a million. The Austrian army is broken, but the Germans still have enough reserves to keep fighting.

Romania joins the Allied side during the initial Russian victories, but once the Germans halt the

Russians they quickly occupy Romania, taking new sources of food and oil.

Goodbye Gallipoli

The British abandon their toehold at Gallipoli and concentrate on fanning the flame of Arab revolt throughout the Ottoman Empire. After a failed Turkish attack against Suez the British advance into Palestine.

The British and Belgians launch a massive three-pronged invasion of German East Africa using African, South African, Indian, and European troops. They occupy huge swaths of territory but still can't find or defeat Von Lettow's army.

Revolution in Petrograd

The failure of the 1916 summer offensive is the last straw for the people of Russia. Mutinies in the army and navy lead to a general revolution in February 1917. The Tsar abdicates and a provisional republic takes over. The new government tries to continue the war, but the soldiers won't have it. They sweep the Bolsheviks into power and Russia leaves the war.

INTRODUCTION OF THE AIRPLANE

At the beginning of the Great War aeronautics was in its infancy. Like many fields of human endeavor, the war spurred development of the airplane into high gear, and by November 1918 the planes that flew over the battlefield were as different from their predecessors as tanks were to horse mounted cavalry.

All of the belligerents entered the war with some sort of air force. Originally used as artillery spotters and for reconnaissance (although Turkey carried out the first aerial bombing in 1911), the need to deny the enemy's airborne eyes led to the development of fighters. The more robust biplanes edged out single wing aircraft, and as combat in the skies increased, the need for more effective means of killing led to the development of the interrupter mechanism so that guns could be fired through the propeller, making it much more effective. Tactics also improved, moving from the lone hunter to formation flying and standardization of aircraft type within the same squadron to ease maintenance issues. Flying high above the mud of the trenches, pilots became cultural icons to the public, embodying the notion of the nobility of war that many at home still clung to.

THE CRUCIFIED SOLDIER

During the Battle of Ypres reports emerged from the battlefield of a Canadian soldier crucified with bayonets by the Germans. Details varied as to the soldier's rank and nationality, and the location and method of his crucifixion and eventual death.

An investigation into the incident revealed that a Canadian soldier, Sergeant Harry Band, had been captured and nailed to a barn door with bayonets, although his body was never recovered. Rumors of similar incidents continued to crop up, with the nationality of the soldier varying from Canadian to British, as well as the method of execution.

Some soldiers claim something far more diabolical than Germans tortured these unfortunate souls.

A French soldier in gas mask and greatcoat surveys the scene.

The Yanks Are Coming

In February the Germans pull back forty miles on the western front to a superior fortified line, called the Hindenburg line. The British try to keep up the pressure with probing attacks. In April the Germans resume unrestricted submarine warfare, and this time the Americans do declare war. American soldiers begin arriving in France. The British and French want to throw them into existing units on the line right away, but General Pershing insists on keeping an independent force and President Wilson backs him up. So for the first year the Americans remain in a supporting role, training and building up.

It's a race against time for the Allies, as the French army is on the verge of collapse. When General Nivelle orders a new spring offensive, French units mutiny. They continue to hold the line against Germany, but the soldiers simply refuse to make any more suicidal attacks. They also demand better conditions, and the high command grants their wishes.

The Tanks Are Coming

The British have to take the offensive while the French are in disarray. In the autumn they launch a third attack on Ypres in Belgium. It's a bloody



slog which takes three months and costs both sides a quarter-million men each. But late in the year at Cambrai a British tank attack gains more ground in a day than the British have achieved in the previous four months. The future of warfare has arrived.

Italian Apocalypse

With Austria tottering and Russia out of the war, the Germans agree to lend a hand against Italy. In October a joint German-Austrian attack using new tactics and massive artillery support shatters the Italian army. The Italians fall back 40 miles to a defensive line on the Piave River and call to their allies for help.

Desert, Jungle, Sea

Baghdad falls to the British in March, and late in the year British forces take Jerusalem. After the Russian government falls apart, the Russians and the Turks agree to an armistice in December.

As the Allies overrun East Africa, General von Lettow-Vorbeck goes onto the offensive. Late in 1917 he abandons the German colony completely and invades Portugese East Africa (Mozambique). The Allies continue to chase him without success.

At sea the Germans resume unrestricted submarine warfare with a bigger fleet of improved U-boats. The goal is to starve Britain into submission. At first the campaign is extremely successful, but by summer the Allies begin a convoy system which cuts losses to a manageable level.



The Victory Offensive

The German commanders can see that their lines won't stop British tanks. They have plenty of extra men now that Russia is out of the war, so in March of 1918 they begin a series of massive offensives in the west, aiming to break the Allies once and for all. It almost works. They drop a million shells on the British line in five hours. New "stormtrooper" units surge forward. The attacks make great gains at first, but then bog down as the Allies bring up reinforcements to plug the gaps and the Germans outrun their artillery and supply.

The Hundred Days

The effort exhausts the German army and moves them out of their strong defensive positions. The Allies counterattack, hammering the Germans all along the front with tanks and planes. The American Expeditionary Force, fresh and full-strength, takes over a growing share of the front line. Throughout the summer the Allies push the Germans back. In September and October Allied

units punch through the fortified Hindenburg Line, and the Germans have nothing left with which to stop them.

Collapse

The Turks recapture most of their lost territory in the Caucasus, in bloody fighting against the newly independent states there. But they can't stop the British advancing into Syria and the spreading revolts among their Arab and Armenian subjects. When the exhausted Ottomans see their German and Austrian allies on the verge of collapse, they sign an armistice with the British on October 30.

RATS AND LICE

A lack of hygiene in the trenches, along with the generally poor living conditions, caused an epidemic of lice among the frontline troops. Medical authorities estimated that more than 95% of the troops carried these "cooties," which spread trench fever. The close quarters of the dugouts and the necessity of huddling together for warmth enabled these nasty vermin to rapidly spread from soldier to soldier. Delousing stations and baths behind the lines could offer temporary relief, but within hours of returning to the front troops would be lousy again. Trench fever is considered a Long Term Chronic, Minorly Debilitating Disease.

One of the greatest fears among soldiers on all fronts (except the Middle East) were rats. Millions of empty food cans and uncounted human and animal corpses provided a food source that caused an explosion in the rat population in the combat zone. With a pair of rats producing 800 offspring per year, the battlefield literally swarmed with the vermin, who grew to the size of large cats. The fearless creatures would brazenly run across sleeping troops' faces, nibble their fingers and toes, or steal food from tables. A never-ending, fruitless battle was fought against these pests with bayonet, traps, and bullets.

ERNEST HEMINGWAY

Young Hemingway is a Red Cross volunteer ambulance driver. He serves in Italy in the summer of 1918. He spends the fall in hospitals after being wounded by shrapnel. The Italian army awards him a medal for saving a soldier's life. He's only 19 years old. After the he war resumes work as a reporter in Europe. He's athletic as well as talented. Women and danger fascinate him.

THE CZECH LEGION

One of the most interesting units in the Russian Civil War is the Czech Legion. This is a force of some 60,000 Czechs who volunteer to fight on the Russian side in the Great War to liberate their homeland from Austrian rule. With the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk in 1918, the Czechs can't keep fighting, so they agree to leave Russia and join the Allies in France.

The trouble is getting there. They can't go home through German-controlled territory, and they can't go through Turkish territory, so they agree to travel across Russia to Vladivostok on the Pacific and board ships there for Europe.

Strengthened by thousands of freed Czech and Slovak prisoners of war, and armed with Russian weapons, the Legion slowly makes its way eastward along the trans-Siberian railroad line. Relations with the Bolsheviks are soured by mistrust on both sides: the Bolsheviks suspect the Czechs of being anti-communists and the Czechs think the Bolsheviks are pro-German.

With the outbreak of fighting by the White armies and the foreign occupation of Russian ports, the Czech Legion suddenly finds itself a strong military unit in the middle of a power vacuum. The Armistice in 1918 means there's no place for the Legion on the western front either, so the Czechs linger in Siberia, supporting Admiral Kolchak's army and still trying to negotiate passage home.

In 1920, Jan Syrový, the commander of the Legion, cuts a deal with the Bolsheviks. In exchange for handing over Kolchak and the stocks of gold bullion captured from the treasury in Kazan, they can finally leave the country. The Czechs sail from Vladivostok with the help of the Red Cross and arrive in their homeland to become the nucleus of free Czechoslovakia's army.

In the south, the Austrians throw everything they have into a final offensive against the Italians, hoping to knock them out for good, but new Italian commanders and help from the Allies stop them cold. The Italians counterattack at the end of October, managing a decisive victory at Vittorio Veneto. The Austrian army collapses, and the Austro-Hungarian Empire disintegrates. Austria agrees to an armistice on November 4.

As the German army begins to crack, the sailors of the Kaiser's navy mutiny and revolutionary movements break out all through the German Empire. The Kaiser abdicates on November 9 and two days later Germany and the Allies agree to an armistice. The war, at last, is over.

Russia

The Tsar's incompetence and German military victories bring about mutinies in the Russian army and navy in 1917. Tsar Nicholas steps down in March (February in the Russian calendar, which is why it's called the February Revolution).

The new Provisional Government tries to honor Russia's obligations to its allies by continuing the war, but this undermines its popularity. The Germans allow the exiled Bolshevik leader Vladimir Lenin to pass through German-controlled territory to Petrograd, hoping his presence will sow chaos. They get their wish. Lenin's demands for "bread and peace" resonate with the Russian people, and in October he leads a second revolution which sweeps the Bolsheviks into power.

To secure peace, Lenin agrees to a painful settlement with the Germans in the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. The treaty grants independence to Finland, Belarus, Ukraine, and the Baltic republics of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia. The Russians also give up their claims to Poland, Georgia, and Armenia. It's harsh and unpopular, but it ends the war.

Sort of. Both the February and October Revolutions are centered on Petrograd. In the rest of Russia, things are much less settled. After the Bolsheviks take power, the country explodes into civil war. Many military commanders are still loyal to the Romanov dynasty and don't recognize the new government's authority. In Central Asia all the non-Russian peoples are supposedly independent, and some of them resist efforts by the Bolsheviks to enforce party loyalty on them.

The main threat to the Bolshevik government are the "White" armies of Romanov loyalists. In the south, General Anton Denikin leads an army based on the Cossacks of the Don River region. In areas under his control reprisals against suspected Bolsheviks are very harsh, which undermines most of his popular support. His force gets support from the western Allies, but eventually collapses by 1920.

In the east, Admiral Alexander Kolchak leads a force based in Siberia with the support of Cossacks and the Czech Legion. Kolchak uses the title "Supreme Ruler" and like Denikin is extremely harsh and despotic in territories under his rule. His armies hold out until 1919, when popular uprisings and the approach of the Bolsheviks' Red Army bring his rule to an end. Kolchak is captured and executed in 1920.

General Nikolai Yudenich leads the White army in northwest Russia, advancing on Petrograd from a base around the port at Archangelsk. He

has heavy support from Estonian and Finnish groups, and supplies from the Allied force occupying Archangelsk. But he can't quite take Petrograd and when his allies abandon him in 1919 Yudenich goes into exile abroad.

Though the other "White" leaders recognize Kolchak as overall commander, conflicting ambitions and personalities mean there is little coordination among their forces, so that the Red Army under Leon Trotsky can pick them off one by one. The harshness of White commanders does nothing to help their cause.

Complicating Russia's civil war is the presence of foreign troops. The Allies want to make sure the Germans don't grab all of Russia, and they're not at all fond of the Bolsheviks anyway. In August 1918 British, French, American, and Japanese troops seize key Russian port cities, including Archangelsk and Murmansk on the Arctic Ocean, and Vladivostok on the Pacific. The Allies expand the territory under their control during the chaos of the Red versus White fighting.

Japan puts some 70,000 men into Siberia, and the Imperial government dreams of setting up a Japanese-dominated buffer state in eastern Siberia. The Americans and western Allies are in Murmansk and Archangelsk, mostly to keep supply lines open to the Whites. A British force from Iraq moves up into the Caucasus Mountains and occupies the Baku oilfields on the Caspian Sea.

Sideshow Conflicts

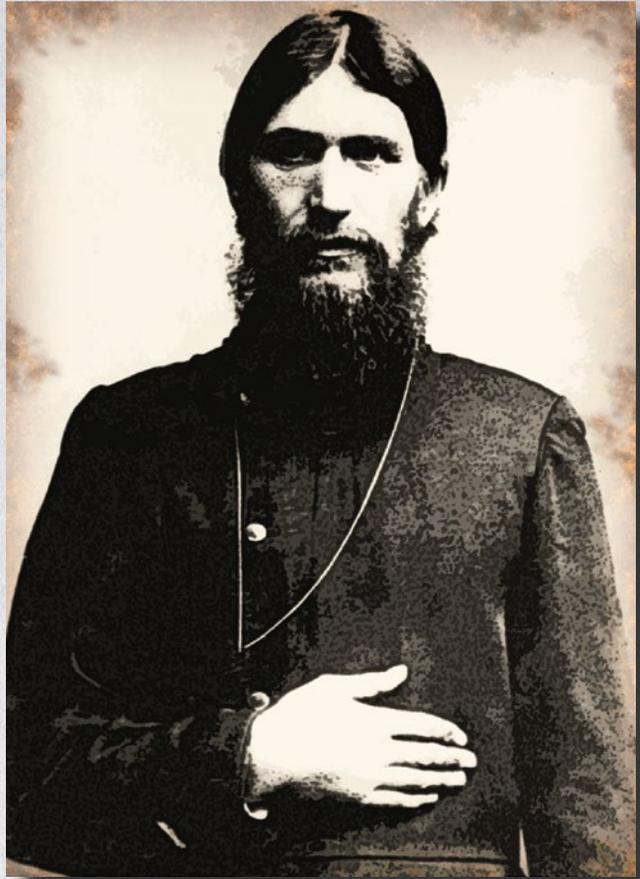
Mexico, China, and Russia

The Great War is not the only conflict in the world between 1914 and 1918, although the struggle between Europe's Great Powers tends to take over any other fights.

Mexico

Mexico is absorbed in an ongoing civil war from 1910 to 1917. It begins as an uprising against the despotic rule of Porfirio Diaz, but gradually becomes a six-way fight among different factions. British interests in Mexico's oil industry and German investment in mines mean both sides in the Great War support different Mexican groups.

Francisco Madero leads the opposition to Diaz at first and promises land reform, but he is a weak



leader and alienates powerful American interests. He is toppled and assassinated in 1913 by General Victoriano Huerta. Huerta has support from Germany, and initially enjoys American favor, but the murder of Madero turns President Wilson against him. An American force briefly occupies the port of Vera Cruz to intercept German arms shipments to Huerta's forces. When rebels drive Huerta to seek refuge in Texas, the Americans clap him in jail where he dies of illness.

Pancho Villa begins as an ally of Huerta, then takes up the banner of Madero's cause after his death. When Venustiano Carranza becomes President after Huerta is deposed, Villa wages war against the government. Villa's forces gradually get pushed back northward, and in 1916 he raids Columbus, New Mexico with the goal of provoking an American response which would allow him to rally Mexicans against them. Woodrow Wilson sends General Pershing and a small force after Villa, but calls it off after several months of fruitless pursuit. Carranza remains in power until 1920, but is never a strong leader and fighting among factions continues until General Obregón takes over.

TRENCH FOOT

Medically known as immersion foot, trenchfoot was a common affliction among troops in the war, especially on the Western Front. Although some officers believed it a symptom of poor morale, the condition resulted from long exposure of the feet to wet conditions, and was especially severe during the wet seasons or in trenches dug in areas with a water table near the surface, such as France or Flanders.

Affected feet swell and lose feeling, turning red or blue. If left untreated, gangrene sets in, requiring amputation.

The Germans, in their more elaborate trenches, suffered less than the British and French, and by 1916 all sides had learned to deal with the problem by enforcing preventative measures.

Each week spent in wet conditions requires a Vigor roll (-2), unless frequent changes of socks, foot inspections or greasing of the feet are undertaken, in which case a Vigor roll is needed. Those who fail have their Pace halved and acquire a level of Fatigue that remains until the feet are treated. Two failed Vigor rolls in a row, or a critical failure on the roll means the trooper has gangrenous feet or toes, which must be amputated.

The chaos in Mexico attracts mercenaries and adventurers from America, and both British and German operatives are very active there. The Germans hope to keep the United States distracted by the unrest in Mexico. In 1916 they offer Carranza's government an alliance against the United States, with the promise of returning all the territory Mexico lost in Texas and the southwest back in 1848. When British agents intercept this offer and reveal it to President Wilson's government early in 1917, American opinion turns sharply and decisively against Germany.

China

In 1912 the Chinese depose the last Manchu emperor and proclaim a republic. The new state quickly falls victim to factional fighting. General Yuan Shikai takes power and begins eliminating democratic institutions with an eye to making himself emperor of a new dynasty.

This leads other military leaders to rebel against him, and by 1915 the country is effectively divided up into small states controlled by local warlords. Japan takes advantage of the chaos to expand its influence in China, taking over German colonial territory and imposing harsh concessions on the struggling Chinese government. None of the other colonial powers with interests in China can spare the resources to intervene, giving Japan a free hand.

The conflict in China lasts until the 1920s. All of China's warlords employ foreign mercenaries, and the colonial powers of Europe all control parts of Chinese territory, so the fighting is very much an international affair. France's sphere of influence is in southeastern China, near French-ruled

Italian troops hurl grenades at the Battle of the Piave River, 1918.



Vietnam. British power centers in the area around Hong Kong, extending west as far as Tibet. Russia dominates the northern provinces. Japan controls Korea and Manchuria, and takes over Germany's sphere of influence in the Shantung Peninsula. The United States supports an "Open Door" policy in China, which means that American merchants and missionaries are spread all over the country.

Everyone has a toehold in Shanghai. During World War I Shanghai is a wide-open, cosmopolitan city. Part is British-controlled, part French, and part is the "International Settlement" open to all. The Chinese government has little or no control there, and it is notorious as a center of crime and espionage.

Aftermath

"This is not Peace. It is an Armistice for twenty years."
—Marshal Ferdinand Foch, 1919

The collapse of the German Army in 1918 leads Kaiser Wilhelm II to abdicate his throne on November 9. Germany becomes a fragile republic, plagued by violence between Communists and ultra-nationalist veterans. The Austro-Hungarian Empire simply ceases to exist. It breaks up into three medium-sized republics, and its Balkan holdings get gobbled up by Romania and the new Kingdom of Yugoslavia.

The Ottoman Empire is carved up by the victorious allies, creating new kingdoms in the Arabian Peninsula and Iraq—all under the protection of the British and French colonial empires. A plan to dismantle the Turkish heartland in Anatolia gets scuttled when a nationalist revolt led by General Mustafa Kemal abolishes the old Ottoman government, establishes a republic based in Ankara, and shows such teeth that the weary victors are glad to leave it alone.

In the final months of the war a new menace ravages the world: an influenza pandemic of Biblical proportions that rapidly spreads around the world. Called the Spanish flu, three day fever, or Flanders fever, it affects so many troops that commanders find they can't wage war. A third of humanity catches the disease, and about 10 percent of those infected die. The virus kills over 50 million people, or more than five times what humans manage with bombs and bullets during the war.

With "the war to end all wars" finally over, dozens of new conflicts immediately follow. Newly independent states in eastern Europe begin fighting over borders. Civil war continues to wrack China and Russia, but now there are thousands of skilled veterans available as volunteers or mercenaries.

The powers of Europe establish the League of Nations in 1919, as a framework for diplomacy which would resolve international differences and make future wars unnecessary. Unfortunately the United States isn't interested in joining, and the only "teeth" the League possesses are what its members volunteered. The Great War turns out to be just the first act in a century of tragedies.

ANIMALS AT WAR

The horse and mule provided the armies of both sides with the majority of their logistical transportation. Hundreds of thousands delivered supplies, food, and ammunition to their two-footed comrades at the front, especially when mud and rain immobilized the rudimentary vehicles of the time. Unfortunately, these animals died by the hundreds of thousands, and many troops mentioned the pathos of the wounded and dead animals scattered across the battlefields in tender terms not used for their dead human comrades.

The Allies turned to North America to supply their horse stock when their own supplies ran low, and thousands of horses crossed the Atlantic. Recognizing the importance of this supply line, German agents in the U.S. inoculated horses bound for France with glanders, a deadly equine disease. They also carried out this biological warfare on the Eastern Front against the Tsar's horses and mules in an attempt to cripple Russia's transportation network.

The warring powers used dogs throughout the conflict. Canines of various breeds could be found on both sides carrying messages in tubes on their collars, guarding against enemy raiders, and fighting the hordes of rats. Red Cross dogs carrying first aid kits and water sought out wounded in No Man's Land or pulled ambulances. Other large breed dogs hauled ammo and other supplies. Strangely, Joffre ordered the French army to stop using dogs after the Battle of the Marne, and they remained off the battlefield until his removal in 1915.

Pigeons carried messages from front line units to the rear, or from advancing units who did not lay wire out during the attack. Dogs even carried pigeons to units at the front, who would release the bird with a message back to its original unit. Specially trained sharpshooters were deployed to bring down these birds.

Chapter Four: The Allies

In the Great War armies clash on a scale never before seen. It ultimately involves all of the biggest military powers in the world. This chapter describes the forces of the Allies: Britain, France, Russia, and America.

The British Empire

"You cannot win this war by sitting still."

—Winston Churchill,

First Lord of the Admiralty

In 1914, King George V rules more of the Earth's surface than anyone before in history. His dominions include the British Isles (including Ireland), Canada, British Honduras, Jamaica, several islands in the Caribbean, Guyana, Fiji, Tonga, New Zealand, Australia, half of Borneo, Malaya, Hong Kong, Burma, India (including modern Pakistan), Aden, South Africa, Rhodesia (modern Zimbabwe), Kenya, Uganda, Zambia, Nigeria, Cyprus, Malta, and Gibraltar. In addition to the lands officially under British rule, they have nearly complete control of Egypt and the Sudan, and vague but important influence in southern Iran and China.

The British Empire is one of Europe's biggest military powers, but starts World War I with the smallest army. Where Continental powers field mass armies based on conscription, the British prefer a small, professional force of long-serving volunteers. This may be ideal for Britain's colonial wars in India and Africa, but it's totally inadequate in the face of the meat-grinder attrition of the Western Front.

At the outbreak of war, Lord Kitchener, Britain's supreme warlord, realizes how inadequate the British Army is for the job ahead. He puts all his considerable reputation and political clout behind a program of rapid expansion, brushing

aside objections from politicians horrified by the expense and military traditionalists who want to preserve the clubby old system.

While Kitchener's expansion gets underway, Great Britain can also call on the armies of her world-spanning empire. British forces in the Great War are the most multinational of any of the combatants. Canadians, Irishmen, Australians, New Zealanders, Indians, Africans, South Africans, and West Indians all fight for King George V.

The backbone of British military power is the Royal Navy. Since the days of Trafalgar the British have maintained their fleet according to the "two power standard." That means their navy should be able to defeat any two other navies in combination. During the years leading up to the Great War, Germany's attempt to build a world-class fleet has been one of the main causes of conflict between the two countries.

King George V may reign, but he doesn't actually rule. Power in the United Kingdom (and thus the British Empire beyond the seas) lies with the Parliament. Whichever party holds the majority in Parliament can appoint the Cabinet ministers, including the nation's chief executive the Prime Minister.

At the outbreak of war the Prime Minister is Herbert Asquith, the reform-minded leader of the Liberal Party. In British politics the Liberals are more or less in the center, between the Conservatives and the rising Labour Party. After the Gallipoli disaster and setbacks on the Western Front, Asquith forms a Coalition government in 1915, bringing prominent Conservatives into the cabinet. But in 1916 Asquith's unpopularity brings that government to an end, and the Conservatives and some Liberals form a new coalition under the charismatic Liberal David Lloyd George, which lasts out the war.

Important people in the British government include Sir Edward Grey, the Foreign Minister at the outbreak of war and Winston Churchill, who starts out as Home Secretary, shifts to the Admiralty, resigns and goes to fight in France after the failure of the Gallipoli offensive, and eventually returns to the Cabinet as Minister of Munitions. Field Marshal Lord Kitchener, the famous general who conquered the Sudan, is Secretary of State for War. After his death in 1916 when the cruiser Hampshire hits a mine off Scotland, the head of the War Department is David Lloyd George, and then in Lloyd George's government the job goes to the Earl of Derby.

Britain's dominions beyond the seas follow her lead in declaring war, but their own governments have a fair degree of autonomy and become increasingly influential in Imperial discussions. Canada's leader is the Conservative Sir Robert Borden, who insists that Canadians fight in all-Canadian battalions rather than being slotted into British units as replacement troops. South Africa's Prime Minister is Louis Botha, who was a commander in the war against the British only a decade earlier, and briefly held Winston Churchill as a prisoner of war. His use of South African troops against German colonies in Africa provokes a brief uprising among diehard Boers. Andrew Fisher is Prime Minister of Australia during the first year of war, then leaves office after the Gallipoli fiasco. He's followed by "Billy" Hughes. William Massey heads New Zealand's coalition government.

Ireland's status changes during the war. In 1914 it's still part of the United Kingdom, but the Parliament has agreed to home rule for Ireland. The outbreak of war puts that on hold. At Easter 1916 there's an uprising in Dublin, which is put down after a week, but the country remains on the brink of civil war until 1919, when it all explodes. Irish troops serve in Europe, and combat veterans form the core of both sides in Ireland's civil war.

The British Army grows rapidly during the war. At the outset it numbers six regular and 14 Territorial divisions, of which seven divisions make up the British Expeditionary Force on

the Western Front. During the war the Army expands to 82 divisions. Nearly half that strength is the 36 "Kitchener" divisions, raised on the recommendation of Field Marshal Kitchener.

British army divisions contain three brigades, and each brigade is made up of four to six battalions or battalion-sized regiments (British regiments have one or two battalions, making them somewhat interchangeable). The "paper" size of a British battalion would be about a thousand men, but almost none of them are at full strength even at the outset, and many are half-sized or weaker.

Infantry battalions are commanded by a lieutenant colonel (if it's a single-battalion regiment, then the commander is a full colonel). They contain a headquarters element, a machine-gun section with two heavy machine guns, and four rifle companies.

Each company is commanded by a captain or major. A standard rifle company at the start of the Great War has four platoons, each led by a lieutenant. Each platoon has four 12-man sections.



The hard lessons of 1914 prompt large-scale changes. The machine-gun section switches first to Vickers guns and then to the easily portable Lewis machine gun. Each platoon also gains more firepower.

A late-war infantry platoon has 24 to 40 men in four sections. One section in each platoon is a machine-gun section armed with one or two Lewis guns. The other three sections are armed with rifles and hand grenades. One section often specializes in rifle grenades. A late-war battalion has about 500 men, but can boast 36 machine guns.

A British tank company typically has 10 to 15 tanks in four sections. A section consists of three tanks, which advance into battle in a "unicorn" formation with one leading and the other two behind and to the sides. Tanks work closely with infantry; a section of three tanks would be followed by a company of foot soldiers.



British Army Officer

The old-line officers at the start of the war are almost exclusively drawn from Britain's upper classes. Though their professional training is sometimes shockingly deficient, most of them have the benefit of experience. As the Army expands and hundreds of "Kitchener Battalions" are formed, the officer class becomes more diverse and meritocratic as middle-class men rise to command positions.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Knowledge (Battle) d6, Knowledge (French or German) d6, Shooting d6

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: —

Edges: Command, Rank (Officer)

Gear: Uniform, canteen, steel helmet (+1), pistol, whistle.

- *Seasoned:* Spirit d8, Knowledge (Battle) d8, Persuasion d4, Dodge, Hold the Line!
- *Veteran:* Smarts d8, Persuasion d6, Stealth d4, Combat Reflexes, Inspire

British Tommy

Soldiers of the King might be London Cockneys, farmers, miners, Scotsmen, Welshmen, Irish volunteers, Canadians, Australians, or South Africans. They all pride themselves on skill with the rifle and a stubborn refusal to give up. At the start of the war, most British troops are Seasoned or Veteran; after the rapid expansion and the call for Imperial help that quality drops to Novice, and by the end of the war the battle-hardened men are typically Veteran again.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Throwing d6

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Edges & Hindrances: —

Gear: Uniform, canteen, steel helmet (+1), Lee-Enfield rifle, 2× Mills Bombs, spade, gas mask.

- *Seasoned:* Spirit d8, Shooting d8, Survival d4, Dodge, Marksman
- *Veteran:* Fighting d8, Stealth d8, Survival d6, Blood and Guts, Incoming!

British Small Arms

Type/Caliber	Range	Damage	RoF	AP	Shots	Weight
Pistols						
Webley .455 <i>Notes: Revolver</i>	12/24/48	2d6+1	1	1	6	3
Rifles						
Lee-Enfield Mk III .303 <i>Notes: Snapfire, Min. Str d6</i>	24/48/96	2d8	1	1	10M	9
Machine Guns						
Maxim .303 <i>Notes: Auto, May not move</i>	30/60/120	2d8	3	2	250B	60
Vickers .303 <i>Notes: Auto, May not move</i>	30/60/120	2d8	3	2	250B	50
Lewis .303 <i>Notes: Auto, Snapfire, Min. Str d8</i>	24/48/96	2d8	3	2	50/100D	30

Special Weapons

Type	Range	Damage	RoF	Weight	Burst
No. 1 Grenade <i>Notes: Roll d6: fails to explode on 1</i>	5/10/20	3d6	—	2	Med
“Jam Tin” <i>Notes: Fuse lit by hand</i>	5/10/20	3d6	—	1	Med
Mills Bomb	5/10/20	3d6	—	2	Med
Hales Rifle Grenade	20/40/80	2d6	1	1	Med
Livens Projector <i>Notes: May not move, ignores armor, can launch gas</i>	25/50/100	2d10	—	500	Large
Stokes Mortar <i>Notes: Heavy Weapon, May not move</i>	—/80/160	4d8	2	100	Med

Tank Guns and Artillery

Type/Caliber	Range	Damage	Burst	AP	Reload
Hotchkiss 6-pounder <i>Notes: HE, Heavy Weapon</i>	70/140/280	3d8	Med	2	1 action
9.2" Howitzer <i>Notes: HE, Heavy Weapon</i>	6 miles	6d10	Large	24	1 minute

British Sapper

Sappers are combat engineers. They lay wire and dig trenches, often under heavy fire. They dig mine tunnels and wage savage battles underground. They use demolition charges to destroy fortifications, and they can also fight with bullet and bayonet.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Knowledge (Construction) d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Throwing d6

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Edges & Hindrances: —

Gear: Uniform, canteen, steel helmet (+1), Lee-Enfield rifle, 2× Mills Bombs, spade, gas mask.

- *Seasoned:* Spirit d8, Shooting d8, Survival d4, Dig In!, Dodge
- *Veteran:* Fighting d8, Stealth d8, Survival d6, Blood and Guts, Brave

British Tank Crewman

Because tanks are in service only a short time in the Great War, the best tank crews are Seasoned, and most are Novice. Tankers may not be stuck in the trenches, but they clank into battle in slow-moving metal boxes full of fuel and ammunition. A direct hit can turn their moving fort into a deathtrap.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Driving d6, Fighting d6, Repair d6, Shooting d6

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Edges & Hindrances: —

Gear: Uniform, canteen, steel helmet (+1), Webley pistol.

- *Seasoned:* Spirit d8, Shooting d8, Repair d8, Hose ‘Em Down, Elan

British Military Ranks

Rank	British Army	Royal Navy	Indian Army
E-1	Private	—	Sepoy/Sowar (cav)
E-2	Private	Able Seaman	Sepoy/Sowar (cav)
E-3	Lance Corporal	Ordinary Seaman	Lance Naik
E-4	Corporal	Leading Seaman	Naik/Lance Daffadar (cav)
E-5	Sergeant	Petty Officer	Havildar/Daffadar (cav)
E-6	Colour Sergeant	Petty Officer	Staff Havildar
E-7	Colour Sergeant	Chief Petty Officer	Staff Havildar
E-8	Sergeant Major	Warrant Officer	Havildar Major
E-9	Sergeant Major	Warrant Officer	Havildar Major
O-1	Lieutenant	Sub-Lieutenant	Jemadar, Subedar, Rissaldar
O-2	Captain	Lieutenant	—
O-3	Major	Lieutenant Commander	—
O-4	Lieutenant Colonel	Commander	—
O-5	Colonel	Captain	—
O-6	Brigadier General	Commodore	—
O-7	Major General	Rear Admiral	—
O-8	Lieutenant General	Vice Admiral	—
O-9	General	Admiral	—
O-10	Field Marshal	Admiral of the Fleet	—

INTRODUCTION OF THE TANK

In an attempt to break the deadly stalemate of trench warfare, the British established a Landships Committee in February 1915. Winston Churchill, always one to look for new and novel (some would say weird) methods of warfare, spearheaded the design of a cross-country armored vehicle to cut wire, bridge trenches, and carry troops across No Man's Land.

By February 1916 a design was approved that utilized caterpillar tracks. Male tanks carried 6-pounder guns as well as machine guns, while females were armed exclusively with machineguns. To disguise their true nature, the name was changed from Landship to "tank" in an attempt to trick spies into thinking they were a mechanized water carrier. Their appearance during the Battle of the Somme terrified the German defenders and allowed for an unprecedented breakthrough, but mechanical unreliability limited the scope of their success. Once the mechanical genie was out of the bottle, an arms race developed, with each country seeking to improve on the basic design in order to break the stalemate and bring the war to a quick conclusion.

Indian Soldier

The fighting men of King George's Indian Empire are the heirs of a warrior tradition millennia old. Their standard of training is the equal of most European armies, and nobody can doubt their courage. At the start of war they are Novice troops.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Survival d6

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Edges & Hindrances: —

Gear: Uniform, canteen, steel helmet (+1), Lee-Enfield rifle, 2× Mills Bombs, spade, gas mask.

- *Seasoned:* Spirit d8, Shooting d8, Throwing d4, Combat Reflexes, Elan
- *Veteran:* Fighting d8, Stealth d8, Throwing d6, Incoming!, Marksman

African Soldier

The British raised regiments in Nigeria and East Africa, intending to use them for nothing more than defense and peacekeeping. But the drain on British resources means that African soldiers are used in campaigns against German colonies and in the Middle East. They prove to be capable fighters in a war which is not their own.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Survival d6

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Edges & Hindrances: —

Gear: Uniform, canteen, Lee-Enfield rifle.

- *Seasoned:* Spirit d8, Stealth d8, Tracking d4, Dodge, Fleet-Footed
- *Veteran:* Fighting d8, Shooting d8, Tracking d6, Brave, No Mercy

Weapons and Equipment

The British lead the way in the development of tanks, and their aircraft industry makes huge improvements in technology during the war. By 1917, the British Army is becoming the world's first mechanized military force.

Mark A "Whippet" Tank

The Whippet is Britain's fastest and most effective tank in the Great War. It enters service in March of 1918, just in time to help stop the final German offensives. A Whippet is essentially a large tractor with the crew in an armored cabin at the rear. Like all British tanks of World War I, the Whippet's fuel tank sits right in front, so that a solid hit from enemy artillery can set the whole vehicle ablaze. It carries four .30-caliber machine guns, which the commander and single gunner have to operate between them. The Whippet carries enough fuel to travel 35 miles.

Type: Tank; **Acc/Top Speed:** 2/6; **Toughness:** 12 (1); **Crew:** 4 (Commander, driver, mechanic, gunner)

Notes: Heavy Armor, Tracked

Weapons:

- Four .303 Vickers machine guns, one per side (5,400 rounds total)

Mark IV Tank

The Mark IV is the combat production model of the first British tank design. It's very distinctive-looking, with tracks running over the top of its lozenge-shaped body and guns in two side sponsons. They first ones enter combat in June of 1917 and prove very effective. There are two types: the "Male" tank carries two Hotchkiss

6-pounder cannon and three machine guns, while the "Female" has five machine guns and no cannon. The Mark IV has an operational range of 12 miles. The armor is fairly thin, and a hit to the front fills the cabin with burning fuel. Each tank carries a spare machine gun to replace weapons which break down. The two loaders also operate machine guns when necessary.

Type: Tank; **Acc/Top Speed:** 1/3; **Toughness:** 15/14/14 (2/1/1); **Crew:** 8 (Commander, driver, mechanic, 2 loaders, 3 gunners)

Notes: Heavy Armor, Tracked

Weapons ("Male"):

- Three .303 Vickers machine guns, one forward, left, and right sides (5,640 rounds total)
- Two 6-pounder cannon in side sponsons (200 rounds total)

("Female"):

- Five .303 Vickers machine guns, one in front and two on each side (12,780 rounds total)

Rolls Royce Armoured Car

Britain begins the war with a flourishing auto industry, and shortly after the outbreak of fighting they start producing armored cars. The Rolls-Royce is the best-known, and is fairly typical of Great War armored cars. It's a standard Rolls-Royce "Silver Ghost" luxury car chassis covered with armor plate and fitted with a turret atop the passenger cabin. The first ones serve with a Royal Navy detachment fighting in Belgium, but they soon find their way to places as far off as Africa, Arabia, and Russia. There are many variants, especially once mechanics in the field get to work making modifications. The Top Speed listed is off-road; on pavement multiply by four.

Type: Armored Car; **Acc/Top Speed:** 5/16; **Toughness:** 10 (1); **Crew:** 3 (Commander, driver, gunner)

Notes: Heavy Armor

Weapons:

- .303 Vickers machine gun in turret (1,000 rounds)

Directorate Military Intelligence Branches

Section	Specialization
MI-1	Codes and code-breaking.
MI-2	Geographical information and translation (Western Hemisphere, Mediterranean region, Middle East, and Africa).
MI-3	Geographical information and translation (Europe).
MI-4	Maps and mapping.
MI-5	Counter-espionage (ancestor of the modern Security Service).
MI-6	Secret Intelligence Service.
MI-7	Propaganda and press censorship office.
"MI-13"	Informal nickname for the unusual investigations team led by Arthur Conan Doyle.

DeHaviland DH.4

The DH.4 is a two-seater biplane, used for a variety of purposes. It's a light bomber, reconnaissance plane, and occasionally a fighter. The Royal Flying Corps first uses them in January 1917; they also fly for the Royal Navy Air Service and the US Army Air Service. It's a reliable plane and popular with crews. After the war they serve as mail planes and passenger carriers. The pilot operates a forward-firing Vickers machine gun, while the bombardier has a pivot-mounted Lewis gun. The pilot operating the Vickers is at a -2 penalty because he's also flying the plane.

Acc/Top Speed: 10/105; **Toughness:** 10 (1); **Crew:** 2 (Pilot, bombardier)

Notes: Biplane (Climb 0). Flight range of 470 miles.

Armament: .303 Vickers machine gun firing forward (250 rounds); .303 Lewis machine gun in rear pivot mount (97 rounds).

Ordnance: 460 lbs. of bombs

Variants: Unarmed versions for civilian use.

Sopwith Camel

One of the better-known British fighter planes of World War I, the Sopwith Camel is a single-seat fighter with a big engine and twin forward-firing machine guns. It enters service in the summer of 1917 and quickly becomes a popular and effective plane. In addition to British and Imperial air units, the Camel is flown by Belgium and American squadrons as well.

Acc/Top Speed: 10/84; **Toughness:** 6 (0); **Crew:** 1

Notes: Aircraft (Climb 1). Flight range of 300 miles.

Armament: Twin .303 Vickers machine guns firing forward (250 rounds each)

Variants: Naval version replaces one Vickers with a Lewis gun mounted on the top wing (97 rounds); night fighter version replaces both Vickers guns with Lewis guns on the top wing. The pilot is at a -2 penalty firing the wing-mounted gun because he also has to fly the plane.

Vickers Vimy

The Vimy was a British heavy bomber biplane, which wins a place in history after the war as the first aircraft to fly the Atlantic Ocean nonstop. They reach service only in the fall of 1918, but heroes on a special mission might use one for transport before that. In the postwar period, the Vimy serves until the mid-1920s. The gunner in the nose operates a Lewis gun on a pivot mount, while the bombardier has a second gun aft.

Acc/Top Speed: 10/73; **Toughness:** 12 (1); **Crew:** 3 (Pilot, bombardier, gunner)

Notes: Aircraft (Climb -1). Flight range of 900 miles.

Armament: .303 Lewis machine guns in nose and rear pivot mount (97 rounds each)

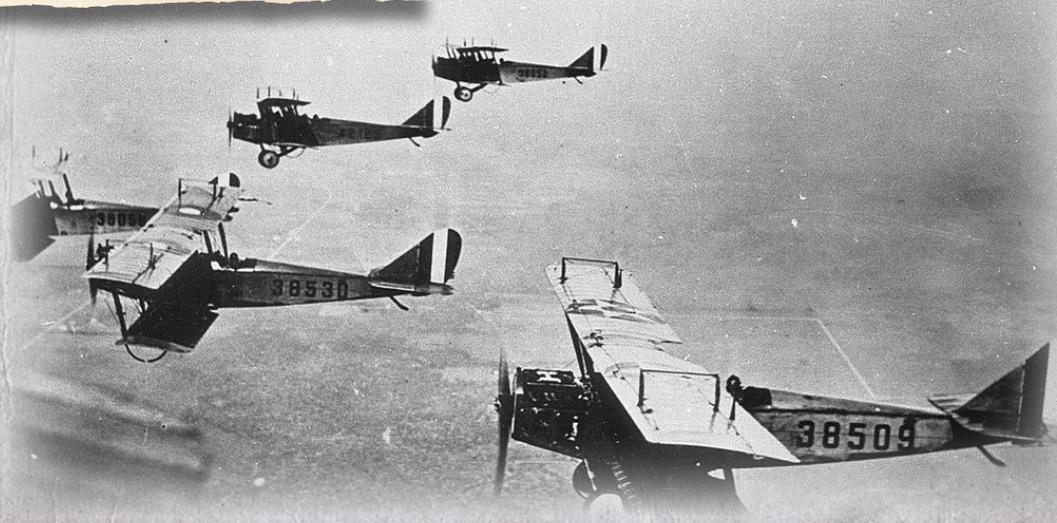
Ordnance: 2,476 lbs. of bombs

Variants: Unarmed versions for civilian use carried 11 passengers; trans-Atlantic plane carried extra fuel tanks for 1,900 mile range.

The Directorate of Military Intelligence

Britain's wartime espionage is conducted by the Directorate of Military Intelligence, which is divided into numbered sections. Each branch is known by the initials "MI" followed by the section number (see table on page 59).

British aircraft flying in formation.



The most important sections of Military Intelligence are the code-breakers of MI-1, the spycatchers of MI-5, the spies of MI-6, and the unusual incidents team nicknamed "MI-13."

Codes and codebreaking are a very powerful weapon in Britain's intelligence arsenal. MI-1 and their rivals in the Royal Navy's "Room 40" are probably the world's best cryptographers. At the start of the war the Navy cuts all of Germany's undersea telegraph cables, with the result that German communication with neutral countries must be via wireless, which can be intercepted. German raider ships and U-boats also stay in touch by radio, and by 1916 the British are sometimes reading German messages before the Germans do.

The geographical sections MI-2 through MI-4 aren't glamorous, but they're still very important. They make use of public information and the resources of British universities and corporations to compile facts about foreign territory. During the war their primary concern is identifying sources of vital resources for Germany's war industries, and similar critical spots for the Allies which must be defended.

MI-5 is in charge of catching enemy spies. The agency relies on the London Metropolitan Police and other local police forces for manpower when making arrests. During the war the resources and responsibilities of MI-5 constantly expand, so that by 1918 it is monitoring anti-war groups, labor organizations, and political radicals. It's also in charge of gathering information on Irish independence movements, but is almost completely ineffective at that. MI-5 recruits Irish agents to monitor Ireland, but most of those agents sympathize with the cause of independence. The Director-General of MI-5 is Major-General Vernon Kell, known as "K."

The pre-war Secret Service Bureau is now called MI-6 and is in charge of spying on the Central Powers (and neutral countries, when needed). Spies in Austria-Hungary are typically members of Czech or Slavic independence movements. In Turkey the British rely on Arabs, Kurds, and Greek agents. Unfortunately, MI-6 has no agents within Germany itself. Most of its intelligence on German plans and operations comes from liaisons with Russian, French, and Italian spy services. In neutral countries, MI-6 can use the vast web of British business interests as a cover and source of agents. The head of MI-6 is Mansfield-Smith Cumming, known as "C." He has a longstanding rivalry with the head of MI-5.

As the number of bizarre reports and paranormal incidents increases during 1914, the intelligence directorate sets up an informal team



to investigate unusual incidents. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle is in charge of the group and reports directly to Cumming at MI-6. His section is known as "MI-13" within the service to the few in the know (consequently when Britain's military intelligence operations expand after 1920, the number 13 is never assigned).

Other Agencies

The Military Intelligence directorate isn't Britain's only espionage service. The colonial government in India has an entirely separate Intelligence Department, focused on identifying potential rebels and thwarting foreign influence. The Indian Intelligence Department operates agents in Tibet, Central Asia, and Persia as well as British-controlled India and Burma. It's an effective organization, but its officers have spent years worrying about Russian influence in Persia and Afghanistan, so are not really focused on countering German and Turkish operations.

Canada has no foreign intelligence service, but counterintelligence is handled by the Royal Northwest Mounted Police. During the war they concentrate on locating German agents, as well as monitoring Indian and Irish independence leaders exiled to Canada.

France

"Your country's survival waits upon the outcome of this battle. Every nerve must be strained to attack and hurl back the enemy...retreat would be unforgivable."

—General Joffre, September 6, 1914

The Republic of France is the only major power in Europe without a monarch. Sadly, that hasn't kept it out of the web of alliances and rivalries which led to the Great War. France also rules an extensive colonial empire: Algeria and Morocco in northern Africa, most of West Africa (except Niger and Cameroon), the northern third of the Congo basin, Djibouti on the Red Sea coast, Madagascar, French Indochina, Tahiti, Guiana in South America, and several Caribbean islands. France also has extensive influence in southeastern China, controls half the city of Shanghai, and has strong commercial ties to Brazil.

The President of the Third Republic in 1914 is the conservative Raymond Poincaré. During the war he is partnered with several Prime Ministers. The first is René Viviani, a socialist who clashes with military leaders. In 1915 Viviani is replaced by Aristide Briand, another socialist who has similar difficulties. Briand leaves office in early 1917, and two more ill-starred premiers follow: Alexandre Ribot for six months, and Paul Painlevé for only two months.

In November 1917 Georges Clemenceau, nicknamed "Tiger" for his aggressive leadership style, becomes prime minister and minister of war and leads the country until 1920. Clemenceau puts an end to much of the infighting among government leaders, and regains the confidence of France's troops in the field as the tide turns in favor of the Allies.

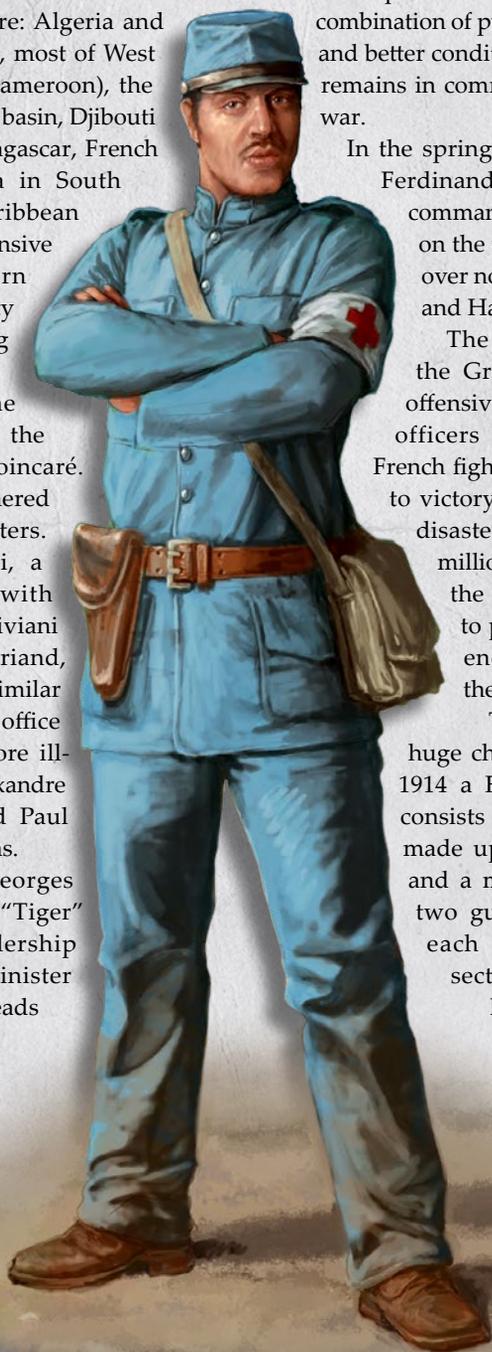
The commander of France's armies in 1914 is General Joseph Joffre, whose stolid personality keeps things together during the initial chaos. He is ruthless about sacking incompetent generals and does a splendid job keeping the armies supplied, but he can't break the stalemate. Joffre is replaced by the aggressive General Robert Nivelle in late 1916. Nivelle's offensives not only fail but bring the French Army to the brink of mutiny, and in March 1917 he is replaced by Philippe Pétain.

Pétain puts down the mutinies through a combination of punishments for ringleaders and better conditions for everyone else. He remains in command until the end of the war.

In the spring of 1918, French Marshal Ferdinand Foch becomes supreme commander of all the Allied forces on the western front, putting him over not only Pétain but Pershing and Haig as well.

The French Army begins the Great War with an all-out offensive all along the front. The officers expect sheer will and French fighting spirit will carry them to victory. In practice, Plan 17 is a disaster. The French lose half a million men in the first weeks of the war, but they do manage to prevent the Germans from encircling and destroying their army or capturing Paris.

The French army makes huge changes during the war. In 1914 a French infantry regiment consists of three battalions, each made up of four rifle companies and a machine-gun section with two guns. The four companies each contain four 60-man sections, divided into two half-sections of two 15 man squads, although a number of reservists are incorporated into the sections to bring the units up to full strength. A fully mobilized regiment starts the war with about 1000 infantrymen and six machine guns.



French Small Arms

Type/Caliber	Range	Damage	RoF	AP	Shots	Weight
Pistols						
Modèle 1892 8mm <i>Notes: Revolver</i>	12/24/48	2d6	1	—	6	2
Ruby 7.65mm <i>Notes: Semi-Auto</i>	12/24/48	2d6-1	1	—	9	2
Rifles						
Lebel Model 1886 8mm <i>Notes: Snapfire, Min. Str d6</i>	24/48/96	2d8	1	1	10	10
Berthier 8mm <i>Notes: Colonial troops and FFL, Min. Str d6</i>	24/48/96	2d8	1	—	3	8
FA 1917 8mm <i>Notes: Semi-auto, Min. Str d6, issued 1918</i>	24/48/96	2d8	1	1	5	12
Berthier 8mm Carbine	15/30/60	2d6	1	—	3 or 5	7
Machine Guns						
Chauchat 8mm <i>Notes: Auto, Snapfire, Jams on roll of 1, Min. Str d8</i>	20/40/80	2d8	3	1	20	20
Hotchkiss Mle 1914 8mm <i>Notes: May not move</i>	30/60/120	2d8	3	1	30/250B	50
St. Étienne Mle 1907 8mm <i>Notes: May not move, Jams on roll of 1</i>	30/60/120	2d8	3	1	25/300B	60

Special Weapons

Type	Range	Damage	RoF	Weight	Burst
Flamethrowers					
Schildt 3-bis <i>Notes: Carried by 2 men, Min. Str d8</i>	Cone	2d8	1	65	—
Infantry Guns					
37mm Infantry Gun <i>Notes: Heavy Weapon, AP 2, Carried by 3 men or horse-drawn</i>	40/80/160	3d6	1	200	Small

Mortars

Type/Caliber	Range	Damage	Burst	AP	Reload
58mm Mortar <i>Notes: Heavy Weapon, weighs 170 lbs.</i>	—/70/140	4d8	Large	2	2 rounds
150mm Mortar <i>Notes: Heavy Weapon</i>	—/100/200	6d8	Large	12	3 rounds

Once the war fossilizes into trench warfare, the French put their faith in firepower. French commanders never make attacks without a huge bombardment first. A regiment in 1916 bristles with weapons. It still contains three battalions, but a late-war battalion is made up of three rifle companies and a specialist machine-gun company with sixteen machine guns.

Companies are larger, containing four platoons and a machine-gun section with three or four guns, or an artillery section with a 37mm cannon. Each infantry platoon in turn is divided into four squads: two rifle squads, a machine-gun squad, and a "bombing squad" armed with hand grenades. Thus a late-war regiment can boast nearly 2,000 men with 100 machine guns.

Late in the war the French also introduce penal battalions, called the "African Light Infantry" even though most are from France itself. The penal battalions are staffed by soldiers from military prisons, and by petty criminals from civilian jails trading military service for a suspended sentence. Discipline in penal battalions is extremely harsh and morale is poor.

French cavalry have a similar organization to infantry, although as the war drags on many cavalry regiments are permanently dismounted and fight as infantry in the trenches. French cavalry divisions each include a bicycle cavalry company with men mounted on rugged folding bicycles.

French Military Ranks

Rank	French Army	French Navy
E-1	Soldat de deuxième classe	Matelot
E-2	Soldat de première classe	Gabier Brevete
E-3	Caporal	Quartier Maitre
E-4	Sergent	Second-Maitre
E-5	Sergent	Maitre
E-6	Sergent-Major	Premier Maitre
E-7	Sergent-Major	Maitre Principal
E-8	Adjutant	Major
E-9	Adjutant-Chef	Major
O-1	Lieutenant	Enseigne de Vaisseau
O-2	Capitaine	Lieutenant de Vaisseau
O-3	Commandant	Capitaine de Corvette
O-4	Lieutenant Colonel	Capitaine de Frégate
O-5	Colonel	Captaine de Vaisseau
O-6	Général de Brigade	Contre-Amiral
O-7	Général de Division	Vice-Amiral
O-8	Général de Corps	Vice-Amiral d'Escadre
O-9	Général d'Armée	Amiral
O-10	Maréchal de France	Amiral de France (none serving)

French Officer

French officers get rigorous training at the St. Cyr academy and consider themselves the guardians of France's honor and traditions. They use harsh discipline to keep order, solve problems by improvisation ("Systeme D," meaning "work it out somehow"), and dream of recovering lost French territory from the hated Boche.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Knowledge (Battle) d6, Notice d6, Riding d6, Shooting d6

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: —

Edges: Rank (Officer)

Gear: Uniform, canteen, steel helmet (+1), Modèle 1892 or Ruby pistol, gas mask.

- *Seasoned:* Smarts d8, Knowledge (Battle) d8, Intimidation d4, Stealth d4, Blood and Guts, Command
- *Veteran:* Fighting d8, Stealth d6, Survival d4, Brave, Inspire

French Poilu

The French are fighting to defend their homeland. At the start of the war they are old-fashioned figures in long coats and bright red trousers. By the end they're wearing horizon blue, and are tough and determined. The ordinary soldiers eventually refuse to make any more suicidal attacks, but they don't abandon the front lines. When the army provides more humane

conditions they recover their spirit and fight their way to the Rhine.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Throwing d6

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Edges & Hindrances: —

Gear: Uniform, canteen, steel helmet (+1), Lebel rifle, 2× grenades, spade, gas mask.

- *Seasoned:* Spirit d8, Survival d4, Throwing d8, Blood and Guts, Brave
- *Veteran:* Fighting d8, Stealth d8, Survival d6, Dig In!, Incoming!

French Cavalryman

France begins the war with a substantial cavalry force, and their mission evolves throughout the

war. On offense, cavalry do scouting and raid enemy lines of communication. On defense they stay in reserve to counterattack enemy breakthroughs. By the later years of the war many cavalry regiments are converted to infantry; after 1916 use the Poilu template for cavalry. Cyclists have the same Traits, but replace Riding with Driving (Bicycle).

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Riding d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Survival d6

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Edges & Hindrances: —

Gear: Uniform, canteen, steel helmet (+1), Berthier carbine, gas mask, lance.

- *Seasoned:* Agility d8, Spirit d8, Shooting d8, Throwing d4, Elan, Steady Hands
- *Veteran:* Fighting d8, Stealth d8, Survival d6, Blood and Guts, Incoming!

Colonial Troops

Originally called Marines, French Colonial Troops differ from their "Metropolitan" counterparts in that they are the forces deployed overseas. Like American Marines, their job is to project power onto the shores of France's overseas possessions. As such, they tend to have seen more action than the standard draftee stationed in France. Not to be confused with native troops like the Tirailleur d'Afrique or Spahis, these soldiers are typically natives of France and provide a cadre of European troop formations in places like

North Africa or Indochina. All Colonial Troops are Seasoned.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Survival d6, Throwing d6

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: —

Edges: Marksman

Gear: Uniform, canteen, steel helmet (+1), Lebel rifle, 2× grenades, spade, gas mask.

- *Veteran:* Vigor d8, Stealth d8, Blood and Guts, Incoming!

Foreign Legionnaire

The Foreign Legion admits soldiers from any nation or background, and once their service is done they became French citizens. The Legion is famous for harsh discipline and unbreakable courage. All Foreign Legionnaires are at least Seasoned troops.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Survival d6, Throwing d6

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: —

Edges: Combat Reflexes, Marksman

Gear: Uniform, canteen, steel helmet (+1), Berthier rifle, 2× grenades, spade, gas mask.

- *Veteran:* Fighting d8, Throwing d8, Incoming!, No Mercy

Tirailleur d'Afrique

To offset Germany's larger population base, the French Army recruits soldiers from France's African colonies. French North African soldiers are called "Zouaves" and use the same template as French regular Poilus. African troops are called "Tirailleurs d'Afrique" or "Spahis." They wear tall fezzes instead of caps and switch to khaki instead of light blue. African troops are commanded by white officers, but experience less prejudice than Africans in other armies. The French use them both in Africa and in France itself.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Survival d6, Tracking d6

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Edges & Hindrances: —

Gear: Uniform, canteen, steel helmet (+1), Berthier rifle, grenade, spade, gas mask.

- *Seasoned:* Spirit d8, Shooting d8, Throwing d4, Brave, Dodge

FOOD AND WATER

On paper, most of the militaries of the warring powers provided their troops with around 4,000 calories per day. In reality, getting food to the front line troops was a difficult and dangerous task. Field kitchens in the rear prepared the rations, and when night fell details would lug containers of food to the soldiers in the forward trenches. Assuming no shellfire interrupted the progress of the bearers, the meals would arrive lukewarm at best.

Food was monotonous, and many a cook was roundly cursed for their lack of culinary skills. Tobacco and alcohol was provided to soldiers of all sides. "Iron" rations were provided to the troops for emergency use, and consisted of canned meats and biscuits, with the French even providing chocolate rations and wine.

Drinking water was also a vital commodity. While plenty of water filled the corpse-choked shell holes and trench bottoms, only the most foolish or desperate drank from them. Potable water had to be brought up from the rear by battalion water carts. In a pinch, some men would strain ground water through their socks or other pieces of cloth and boil it over their trench stoves to make tea or coffee.

- *Veteran:* Fighting d8, Stealth d8, Throwing d6, Blood and Guts, Combat Reflexes

Weapons and Equipment

Renault FT-17

The Renault enters the war late and in limited numbers, but it has a tremendous impact. With its top turret and engine tucked safely in the rear, it sets the standard for all subsequent tank designs. Though small and thin-skinned, it's one of the best tanks of the Great War and the Americans eagerly adopt them upon arrival in France. The FT-17 enters action in May of 1918, serves in various wars of the 1920s and 1930s, and a few even fight in World War II. Both the Americans and Italians make their own post-war copies, the M-1917 and the Fiat 3000, respectively. The French field two models, one armed with a 37mm cannon, the other with a Hotchkiss machine gun. There is also an unarmed command variant carrying a tall radio mast to pick up orders from headquarters. The FT-17 has an operating range of 20 miles. Because the tank is so noisy inside, the gunner/commander must communicate with the driver by kicking him on the shoulders.

Type: Tank; **Acc/Top Speed:** 2/5; **Toughness:** 13/12/12 (2/1/1); **Crew:** 2 (Commander/gunner, driver); **Notes:** Heavy Armor, Tracked

"It's a long way to Tipperary,
over there, over there..."



Weapons:

- Hotchkiss 8mm machine gun (5,400 rounds)
or 37mm cannon (237 rounds)

Schneider CA1

If the Renault is one of the war's best tanks, the Schneider is quite possibly the worst tank to actually serve in combat, ever. It's slow, bogs down easily, and the fuel tanks are in the fighting compartment, so one solid hit can turn the tank into a crematorium. The weapons have odd and inconvenient arcs of fire. After a disastrous debut in the summer of 1917, most are converted to unarmed supply transports.

Type: Tank; **Acc/Top Speed:** 1/2; **Toughness:** 12 (1); **Crew:** 6 (Commander, driver, 3 gunners, loader)

Notes: Heavy Armor, Tracked

Weapons:

- 75mm short cannon right front (200 rounds)
- Two Hotchkiss 8mm machine guns, right and left sides (5,400 rounds each)

White Armored Car

The French order large numbers of trucks from the White Motor Company of Ohio, and convert them to armored cars with a turret on top. The White armored cars have several unique features: they have duplicate steering controls so they can be driven in reverse with no penalties. The turret is also double-ended, with a machine gun pointing from one side and a 37mm cannon from the other (some models have two machine guns). The speed is off-road; on a paved road multiply by four. Operating range is about 150 miles.

Type: Armored Car; **Acc/Top Speed:** 2/10; **Toughness:** 12 (1); **Crew:** 4 (Commander, driver, 2 gunners)

Notes: Heavy Armor

Weapons:

- Hotchkiss 8mm machine gun, turret (2,000 rounds)
- 37mm cannon (or a second Hotchkiss), turret opposite facing

Nieuport 11

The Nieuport enters service in 1916 and ends the dominance of the German Fokker monoplanes. It's a single-seat biplane with good speed and agility, armed with a single machine gun on the top wing. The French use them in the first part of 1916, then switch to the faster Nieuport 17 version. Nearly all the Allies in 1916 use them. Firing the wing-mounted gun suffers a -2 penalty because the pilot must also fly the plane at the same time.

Acc/Top Speed: 10/71; **Toughness:** 6 (0); **Crew:** 1

Notes: Aircraft (Climb 1). Flight range of 300 miles.

Armament: Single Hotchkiss 8mm or .303 Lewis on top wing (100 rounds)

Variants: The Nieuport 17 has a bigger engine, giving it a Top Speed of 80, and mounts a fixed forward-firing .303 Vickers machine gun (250 rounds).

SPAD S.XIII

The SPAD S.XIII is one of the most-produced fighters on the Allied side of the Great War. It enters service in the spring of 1917 and establishes itself as a fast and rugged plane. SPADs have a reputation

as hard to control, but can be awesome in the hands of a skilled pilot. All Piloting skill rolls are at a -1 penalty until the pilot has flown a SPAD for 10 hours total, at which point the penalty disappears. All the Allied powers adopt them, and they are used all over the world after the end of the war.

Acc/Top Speed: 15/100; **Toughness:** 7 (0); **Crew:** 1

Notes: Aircraft (Climb 1). Flight range of 280 miles.

Armament: Twin .303 Vickers machine guns firing forward (250 rounds each)

The Deuxième Bureau

As far as most people know, French military intelligence has two branches. The Premier Bureau is in charge of keeping the French high command informed about the state of French and allied military forces. The Deuxième Bureau gathers intelligence on potential enemies and handles counter-espionage within France and its empire.

The overall head of the Deuxième Bureau is General Charles-Joseph Dupont. Within the Bureau, foreign intelligence is handled by the *Section de Centralisation du Renseignement* (SCR) under Commandant Georges Ladoux. In 1917 the counterintelligence task is handed over to the Sûreté, France's national police force.

The Deuxième Bureau has an excellent code-breaking department, which cracked several German diplomatic and military codes. Intelligence cooperation with the other Allied powers is mixed. French and British intelligence share information regularly, but coordination with Italy and Russia is spotty.

France's primary asset for spying on Germany is the presence of French loyalists behind the lines in German-occupied France and the lost provinces of Alsace and Lorraine. The French also make extensive use of agents from sympathetic neutral countries, including Americans and Spaniards. French intelligence concentrates on Germany, although they do have a handful of agents in Austria and Turkey.

A third bureau is rumored to exist later in the war, but its existence is never officially confirmed. The *Bureau des Phénomènes Mystérieux Non Expliqués* (Bureau of Unexplained Mysterious Phenomena) is brought into being in late 1914 as more and more tales of unbelievable events on the battlefield circulate among the army. Staffed with intelligence officers with strange experiences in the far-flung outposts of the empire, the BPMNE is spoken of in hushed terms by those outside the organization. Often, the arrival of these agents presages a soldier being taken away for "unpatriotic talk" and never being seen again.

The Russian Empire

"The Russia my father gave me never lost a war. We shall fight on to victory."

— Tsar Nicholas II

The Tsar of Russia rules a vast empire, stretching from the German border to the Pacific. His realm includes many subject nations, including Finland, Poland, Ukraine, Georgia, Chechnya, Turkestan, and many more. Nearly all of them have nationalist movements unhappy with Russian rule. The Poles and Muslims of Central Asia are the most active, but every ethnic group has some reason to complain.

In 1914 that includes Russians themselves. The war against Japan in 1904–1905 was a catastrophe, and the Tsar was forced to make important concessions to pro-democracy forces in Russia. But over the past decade he has done his best to reverse most of them, and his secret police have cracked down on opponents.

Russia's government is the closest thing to an absolute monarchy in Europe. There is an elected parliament, the Duma, but the Tsar can veto laws they pass and disband the Duma at will. His control of military and foreign affairs is absolute and unlimited. This is unfortunate because Tsar Nicholas II is a weak ruler with limited competence and even more limited ability to listen to advice.

The Russian army has a poor reputation in the years before World War I. Their defeat at the hands of the Japanese was the first time a major European empire's army had been beaten by Asians in half a century. However, that fiasco meant the Russians made a host of vital reforms between 1905 and 1914, so their performance is in many ways better than expected. They already learned the harsh lesson everyone else gets in 1914. Unfortunately those improvements don't extend to the command level, leading to the early defeats at Tannenberg and the Masurian Lakes at the hands of Hindenburg and Ludendorff.

The biggest problem faced by the Russian Army is logistics. Russia's industrial and transport systems just can't feed and supply an army of three million men in a war that drags on for years. The equipment used by the army is good quality, but there's never enough to go around. Supplies of everything are unreliable, and corruption among the officer class doesn't help. Morale starts off shaky and declines steadily until the country dissolves in revolution.

At the start of war the commander in chief of Tsar Nicholas's armies is his cousin the Grand Duke, also named Nicholas. The Grand Duke is a tall, imposing, handsome man, popular with the troops and the people of Russia. He is competent

but not a brilliant general, and after 1915 the Tsar takes personal command. Unfortunately, Tsar Nicholas is even less competent, so that only Russia's sheer size and manpower keep his nation in the war at all.

Russian Officer

Russian officers are all from the upper classes, almost as alien to their men as the enemy. The junior officers have the best technical training, but up the ranks competence becomes less important than good breeding and connections at court. A few notable exceptions in the high command keep Russia's armies from collapsing, but resentment from below grows with every battlefield disaster.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Knowledge (Battle) d4, Notice d4, Riding d6, Shooting d6

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: —

Edges: Rank (Officer), Upper Class

Gear: Uniform, canteen, steel helmet (+1), Nagant or Smith & Wesson pistol, gas mask.

- *Seasoned:* Knowledge (Battle) d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Command
- *Veteran:* Fighting d8, Knowledge (Battle) d8, Brave, Inspire

Russian Infantryman

Russia's soldiers come from the farm villages of the Russian heartland. They have little education

or experience of the world, but their toughness is legendary. Even the Russian soldier's patience eventually wears thin. The Russian army adopts a French-style steel helmet in 1915, but very few reach the troops on the front before Russia leaves the war.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Survival d6, Throwing d6

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Illiterate

Edges: —

Gear: Uniform, canteen, Mosin-Nagant rifle, 2× grenades, spade, gas mask.

- *Seasoned:* Spirit d8, Notice d6, Brave, No Mercy
- *Veteran:* Fighting d8, Shooting d8, Stealth d8, Dig In!, Incoming!

Cossack Cavalry

Descended from steppe nomads of southern Russia, the Cossacks are feared for their ferocity in battle and their devotion to the Tsar. For generations they have been the vanguard of Imperial expansion in Asia. They fight against Austria and Germany in the west, and against their old enemies the Turks in the Caucasus.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Riding d8, Shooting d6, Survival d6

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Russian Military Ranks

Rank	Russian Army	Russian Cavalry/Cossack	Russian Navy
E-1	Ryadovoi		Seaman 2nd-Rank
E-2	Ryadovoi	Uriadnik	Seaman 1st-Rank
E-3	Gefreitor	Prikaznyi	Quartermaster
E-4	Mladshi-Unteroffizier	—	Bootsmannmaat
E-5	Starshi-Unteroffizier	—	Bootsmann
E-6	Feldfebel	Vakhmistr	Konstapel
E-7	—	—	Unteroffizier
E-8	—	—	Senior Unteroffizier
E-9	Pod-Praporschik	Pod-Khorunzhji	—
O-1	Poruchik, Pod-Poruchik	Kornet/Sotnik	Midshipman
O-2	Shtabs-Kapitan	Shtabs-Rotmistr/Pod-Yesaul	Poruchik
O-3	Kapitan	Rotmistr/Yesaul	Kapitan-Poruchik
O-4	Pod-Polkovnik	Voiskovoi Starshina	Kapitan 2nd-Rank
O-5	Polkovnik	—	Kapitan 1st-Rank
O-6	—	—	—
O-7	General-Maior	—	Counter-Admiral
O-8	General-Lieutenant	—	Vice Admiral
O-9	General (of Infantry, etc.)	—	Admiral
O-10	General Field Marshal	—	General Admiral

Edges & Hindrances: —

Gear: Uniform, canteen, steel helmet (+1), Mosin-Nagant rifle, saber, gas mask.

- *Seasoned:* Agility d8, Spirit d8, Shooting d8, Throwing d4, No Mercy, Steady Hands
- *Veteran:* Fighting d8, Stealth d6, Survival d6, Blood and Guts, Brave

Weapons and Equipment

The Tsar Tank

This fantastic vehicle never actually sees battle, but it's a good example of the kind of bizarre superweapon heroes can encounter in *Weird War I*. Instead of treads, it uses a pair of gigantic spoked wheels 27 feet in diameter to roll across trenches and obstacles, propelled by a set of smaller drive wheels at the rear. It carries one cannon in a top turret, and two more in side sponsons. Although the Tsar Tank has wheels instead of tracks, it can cross the same sorts of terrain. The cannon loaders or commander can operate the machine guns. History says that the real Tsar Tank prototype bogged down in mud during testing and stayed there until after the Revolution; the real story might be more than officially acknowledged.

Type: Tank; **Acc/Top Speed:** 1/7; **Toughness:** 15(1); **Crew:** 10 (Commander, driver, 2 mechanics, 3 gunners, 3 loaders)

Notes: Heavy Armor, Tracked

Weapons:

- Three 6-pounder cannons, one in turret, one each right and left sponson
- Two Maxim guns, one forward and one rear

FOOD & RATIONS

Each nation fed its troops differently, but there were some similarities. Most cooked hot food in field kitchens then transported it to the front via various methods, including mess details, trucks, horses, and even dogs. The trip typically left the food cold, and the bread was already stale, being baked days earlier at larger reserve centers in nearby towns.

Troops usually carried "iron rations" as well, which included cans of food such as the British "Maconochie" stew or "bully beef". English army biscuits (cookies) were so hard they could chip teeth if not soaked in water or coffee first.

Food for Russian soldiers was particularly scarce, due to both production and distribution problems, as it was for the civilians back home (food riots led to the 1917 revolution).

German soldiers fared well at first, but by 1916 the British blockade and lack of farming manpower due to recruitment quickly decreased the quality and quantity of the troop's rations. K-brot bread was particularly hated, and often contained pulverized straw as filler!

Russian Small Arms

Type/Caliber	Range	Damage	RoF	AP	Shots	Weight
Pistols						
Nagantm 1895 7.62mm	12/24/48	2d6-1	1	—	7	2
<i>Notes:</i> Revolver						
Smith & Wesson .44	12/24/48	2d6+1	1	—	6	4
<i>Notes:</i> Revolver						
Rifles						
Mosin-Nagant 7.62mm	24/48/96	2d8+1	1	2	5	9
<i>Notes:</i> Snapfire, Min. Str d6						
Machine Guns						
Chauchat 8mm	20/40/80	2d8	3	1	20	20
<i>Notes:</i> Auto, Snapfire, Jams on roll of 1, Min. Str d8						
Lewis .303	24/48/96	2d8	3	2	50/100D	30
<i>Notes:</i> Auto, Snapfire, Min. Str d8						
Madsen 7.62mm	24/48/96	2d8	3	1	40	22
<i>Notes:</i> Auto, Snapfire, Min. Str d8						
Maxim 7.62mm	30/60/120	2d8	3	2	250B	50
<i>Notes:</i> Auto, May not move						
Vickers .303	30/60/120	2d8	3	2	250B	40
<i>Notes:</i> Auto, May not move						

Special Weapons

Type	Range	Damage	RoF	Weight	Burst
M1914 Grenade	5/10/20	3d6	—	2	Med

Austin Armored Car

The Russian government took to armored cars with great enthusiasm. The war in the east emphasized mobility more than the stalemate in the western trenches, and as a bonus they could be used for crowd control and policing, always a major concern for the Russian monarchy. The Russians built their armored cars on a British Austin truck chassis. Unusually, the armored cars had twin turrets mounted diagonally on top, one right front the other left rear. The car has a duplicate set of driving controls in the rear section, so it can go full speed in reverse with no penalties. They see extensive use on both sides during the Revolution and the civil war that follows.

Type: Armored Car; **Acc/Top Speed:** 2/18; **Toughness:** 12 (1); **Crew:** 10 (Commander, driver, 2 gunners)

Notes: Heavy Armor

Weapons:

- Two Maxim guns in turret mounts, one front and one rear (1,000 rounds each)

Ilya Muromets Bomber

Another example of the longstanding Russian love of sheer scale, the Ilya Mumorets is the brainchild of legendary aviation pioneer Igor Sikorsky. Intended as a luxury airliner, complete with a promenade deck atop the fuselage for passengers to stretch their legs, in military service it is very successful as a heavy bomber. The Russian Army experiments with different combinations of weapons throughout the war; the armament can vary considerably. With multiple machine guns for defense, it's a formidable opponent and only one is lost to the enemy. Russian adventurers on missions in remote regions may be issued an Ilya Muromets for transport, and Russian soldiers in need of battlefield support are always cheered up by the rumble of four engines overhead.

Acc/Top Speed: 10/50; **Toughness:** 14 (2); **Crew:** 8 (Pilot, copilot, bombardier, mechanic, 4 gunners)

Notes: Aircraft (Climb -1). Flight range of 300 miles with bomb load, up to 600 without.

Armament: .303 machine guns in nose, tail, and two top pivot mounts (80 rounds each)

Ordnance: 1,100 lbs. of bombs

Variants: Airliner version carries 12 passengers and a steward.

Secret Police and Intelligence

There are two primary intelligence agencies. The Okhrana, or secret police, are part of the Interior Ministry and are supposedly responsible for counterintelligence and monitoring rebel and

terrorist activity. But since there are many Russian revolutionaries living in exile, the Okhrana has a substantial foreign intelligence service of its own, with operatives in London and Paris.

The Okhrana are very effective at infiltrating labor unions and revolutionary groups, often deliberately inciting violent acts to justify crackdowns. At the outbreak of war, the Okhrana switch their focus to hunting German and Austrian agents. To most Okhrana officers German spies, trade unionists, Freemasons, Jews, pro-democracy activists and government reformers are all the enemy, and are probably working together to destroy Holy Mother Russia. As the war progresses, the Okhrana are drafted into battling the increasing weirdness at the front.

Russian military intelligence is more focused on wartime enemies. In Germany they make use of social connections among the Prussian and Russian aristocracy to recruit informants in Berlin. Neutral Sweden and Denmark are the primary Russian points of contact for spying on Germany. In Austria they get most of their information from Slavic nationalists in the Hapsburg military, though there's no convenient way to get into or out of Austria-Hungary. Russian intelligence in Turkey relies on Greek and Armenian agents. Persia is the main conduit for infiltrating the Ottoman Empire.

Unfortunately for the empire, the Okhrana are compromised by the influence of Rasputin and his psychic abilities. He doesn't control the whole agency, but he has enough puppets and supporters within the Okhrana that he knows just about everything the Okhrana does. They can't act against him, and he thwarts many efforts to investigate weird events.

Okhrana Officer

This is an official of the Tsar's secret police. His job is to investigate any activities which might threaten Holy Mother Russia, which in practice means just about anything he wants to. When working undercover to infiltrate a revolutionary group, he disguises himself as a disaffected middle-class intellectual. When on a raid, he's in uniform accompanied by a squad of police.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Investigation d6, Shooting d6, Streetwise d6

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: —

Edges: Rank (Officer)

Gear: Uniform, Nagant pistol.

- *Seasoned:* Notice d8, Investigation d8, Streetwise d8
- *Veteran:* Shooting d8, Stealth d8, Investigator

United States of America

"No commander was ever privileged to lead a finer force; no commander ever derived greater inspiration from the performance of his troops."

—John J. Pershing, Commander,
American Expeditionary Force

The United States of America is the world's biggest industrial economy in 1914, and both sides in the Great War try to court America. Germany's incredibly ham-fisted efforts eventually succeed in driving America into the Allied camp. The British and French borrow vast sums from the United States to fund their own war effort, which puts the Americans in a dominant position in the alliance by the end of the war.

America's leader during World War I is President Woodrow Wilson, who does his best to keep America out of the conflict as long as possible. He even wins re-election in 1916 on a platform of "He Kept Us Out Of The War." Six months later, America joins the fight.

The United States Army at the start of the Great War is tiny, configured mostly for patrolling the western territories and interventions in Latin America. When Europe explodes into war, the Americans begin a frenzied buildup. Even after they enter the conflict their force is far smaller than either the British or French. Their help to the Allies was as much psychological as material; simply knowing there were more doughboys on the way kept French and British spirits up.

The American Expeditionary Force in France is commanded by General John Pershing, an experienced officer who previously led the hunt for Pancho Villa in Mexico. Pershing clashes with his French and British colleagues, as he intends to use his forces as an independent army while they want to throw American battalions into the line under Allied command. Pershing ultimately gets his way, and the Americans take over a segment of the front between the French and British armies.

American Officer

The American army places a high emphasis on academic training for officers, so that commanders have much more technical knowledge than their European counterparts. However, except for veterans of the war with Spain or the Mexican expedition, few have actually seen much combat before they arrive in France.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Knowledge (Battle) d6, Notice d6, Riding d6, Shooting d6

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: —

Edges: Rank (Officer)

Gear: Uniform, canteen, steel helmet (+1), M1911 pistol, gas mask.

- *Seasoned:* Spirit d8, Knowledge (Battle) d8, Stealth d4, Command
- *Veteran:* Notice d8, Stealth d6, Survival d4, Leader of Men, Level Headed

American Military Ranks

Rank	U.S. Army	U.S. Marines	U.S. Navy
E-1	Private	Private	Apprentice
E-2	Private	Private 1st Class	Seaman 2nd Class
E-3	Private 1st Class	Lance Corporal	Seaman
E-4	Corporal	Corporal	Petty Officer 3rd Class
E-5	Sergeant	Sergeant	Petty Officer 2nd Class
E-6	Staff Sergeant	Staff Sergeant	Petty Officer 1st Class
E-7	Sergeant 1st Class	Gunnery Sergeant	Chief Petty Officer
E-8	Master Sergeant	Master Sergeant	Senior Chief Petty Officer
E-9	First Sergeant	First Sergeant	Master Chief Petty Officer
O-1	Lieutenant (1st, 2nd)	Lieutenant (1st, 2nd)	Lieutenant j.g., Ensign
O-2	Captain	Captain	Lieutenant
O-3	Major	Major	Lieutenant Commander
O-4	Lieutenant Colonel	Lieutenant Colonel	Commander
O-5	Colonel	Colonel	Captain
O-6	Brigadier General	Brigadier General	Commodore
O-7	Major General	Major General	Rear Admiral
O-8	Lieutenant General	Lieutenant General	Vice Admiral
O-9	General	General	Admiral
O-10	General of the Armies	—	Admiral of the Navies

FLANDERS FIELD

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.
We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.
Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

—Lieutenant-Colonel John McCrae

American Doughboy

American soldiers come from all walks of life and must learn their trade in an army which is still figuring out how to train them. They're famous for their irreverent attitude and enthusiasm.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Throwing d6

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Edges & Hindrances: —

Gear: Uniform, canteen, steel helmet (+1), Springfield rifle, 2× Mk1 grenades, spade, gas mask.

- *Seasoned:* Spirit d8, Shooting d8, Throwing d8, Dig In!, Élan
- *Veteran:* Fighting d8, Stealth d8, Survival d4, Incoming!, No Mercy

American Marine

The Marines start the war with more recent combat experience than the Army, from various expeditions in Latin America and the Pacific. They're tough and seldom hesitate to let people hear about it. All Marines are assumed to be Seasoned troops.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Survival d6, Throwing d6

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 6

Hindrances: —

Edges: Marksman

Gear: Uniform, canteen, steel helmet (+1), Springfield rifle, 2× Mk1 grenades, spade, gas mask.

- *Veteran:* Vigor d8, Stealth d8, Blood and Guts, Incoming!

Weapons and Equipment

Surprisingly, most American gear is based on European designs. The Army has the luxury of choosing what has worked best in battle, and America's arms factories have been producing equipment for France and Britain for three years by the time the doughboys go to war. Most of the American equipment is French, partly because the horrible casualties in the French Army give them a surplus of gear and a shortage of men to use it. American infantry use French machine guns, American tank battalions use French Renaults, the Army Air Service flies French SPADs and British DeHavillands, and the American artillery use French 155-mm guns.

Ford Model T Ambulance

If American military equipment comes from Europe's arsenals, everyone relies on American motor transport. The dependable Ford Model T is used by all the Allies in a variety of roles: cargo truck, staff car, and tow vehicle. This is an ambulance based on the Model T chassis, and can be found in just about any theater of the war even before the United States joins the conflict. Model T Fords are legendary in their ability to operate on bad roads.

Type: Ambulance; **Acc/Top Speed:** 5/15; **Toughness:** 7 (1); **Crew:** 3 (driver, 2 stretcher-bearers)

Notes: Can carry 2 wounded

American Intelligence

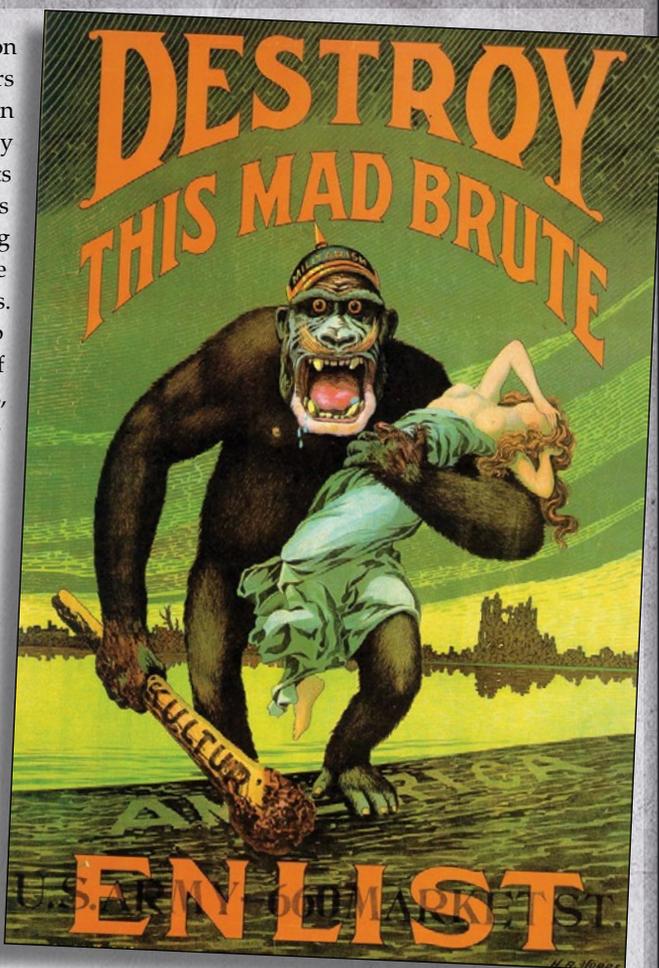
The United States has almost no intelligence-gathering capability as the country enters the Great War. The Army's intelligence service concentrates on geographical information and research in published sources. Once the United States enters the war, all its information about the Central Powers quickly becomes out of date. For espionage in Europe, the Americans depend heavily on information from France and Britain.

One area in which American information excels is regarding Austria-Hungary. With large numbers of Czech, Hungarian, and Croatian immigrants in America's industrial cities, the US has excellent channels into Austrian economic information and government bureaucracy.

With the coming of war, President Wilson follows the advice of the British and orders the Justice Department to form the Alien Enemy Bureau, a part of the War Emergency Division. Strangely, these black-suited agents frequent the frontlines, interrogating soldiers on their experiences at the front and looking for signs of disloyalty, especially if they have been spreading tales of unexplainable events.

President Wilson also forms a group known as the Inquiry. Composed of archaeologists, anthropologists, historians, and other scholars, the Inquiry's ostensible purpose is to advise Wilson on the cultures and conflicts of Europe and the Middle East. These civilians frequently compete with the AEB to interview troops about their sightings of the weird or strange.

Some important members of the Wilson government are the charismatic pacifist William Jennings Bryan (Secretary of State until 1915), Bryan's successor the lawyer Robert Lansing, Lindley Garrison (the Secretary of War who builds up the army to fighting strength), Newton Baker (Garrison's replacement after the U.S. enters the war), and Josephus Daniels (Secretary of the Navy, who encourages new technology development).



American Small Arms

Type/Caliber	Range	Damage	RoF	AP	Shots	Weight
Pistols						
M1911 Colt .45 ACP	12/24/48	2d6+1	1	—	7	2.5
<i>Notes:</i> Semi-auto						
M1917 .45	12/24/48	2d6+1	1	—	6	2.5
<i>Notes:</i> Revolver						
Smith & Wesson Model 10 .38	12/24/48	2d6-1	1	—	6	1
<i>Notes:</i> Revolver						
Rifles						
M1903 Springfield .30-06	24/48/96	2d8	1	—	5	8.5
M1912 Winchester 12-gauge	12/24/48	1-3d6	1	—	6	8
<i>Notes:</i> Shotgun						
Machine Guns						
M1917 Browning .30-06	24/48/96	2d8	3	2	250B	100
<i>Notes:</i> Auto, May not move						
M1919 BAR .30-06	30/60/120	2d8	2	2	20	20
<i>Notes:</i> Auto, Snapfire, Min. Str d8, issued July 1918						

Special Weapons

Type	Range	Damage	RoF	Weight	Burst
Mark 1 or F1 Grenade	5/10/20	3d6	—	2	Med
<i>Notes:</i> Mark 1 fails to detonate on a Throwing roll of 1					

Italy

The Kingdom of Italy hesitates a year before joining the war. Italy has long-standing diplomatic and military ties with Germany, but cultural and economic ties with Britain and France. In the end, the deciding factor is that Austria still controls territory the Italians consider properly theirs. Siding with the Allies seems like the best way to get it. Unfortunately, the Austrians in the Alps prove much tougher than the Italians expect, and a generation of young Italian men lose their lives trying to dislodge the enemy.

Italy's sovereign is King Victor Emmanuel III. His government is led by Antonio Salandra, of the Conservative party. Salandra secretly commits Italy to war against popular opposition in 1915. Salandra's government falls in 1916 after military reverses on the Alpine front, and he's replaced by the elderly Paolo Boselli, who defers to military leaders on everything. Boselli's government falls in autumn 1917, after the disaster at Caporetto, and Vittorio Emanuele Orlando, a liberal from Sicily, becomes Prime Minister. Orlando's government remains in power through the end of the war.

The commander of Italy's armies during 1915–1917 is General Luigi Cadorna, a harsh disciplinarian who even revived the ancient Roman practice of executing every tenth man in a unit as punishment for failure in battle. Cadorna's strategy hinges on capturing the Austrian fortress at Gorizia, but after eleven failed assaults and the Austro-German victory at the battle of Caporetto,

he is replaced by General Armando Diaz, who stops the Austrian advance and leads the army to victory at Vittorio Veneto in 1918.

Italian Officer

Italian officers come from the middle and upper classes of northern Italy, loyal to Italy's King and fired up with enthusiasm to gain territory and establish Italy as a first-rank power. Many were trained in Germany before the war, which gives them good insight into enemy methods.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Knowledge (Battle) d6, Riding d6, Shooting d6

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: —

Edges: Rank (Officer)

Gear: Uniform, canteen, steel helmet (+1), Glisenti 1910 pistol, gas mask.

- *Seasoned:* Smarts d8, Knowledge (Battle) d8, Notice d4, Stealth d4, Blood and Guts, Command
- *Veteran:* Fighting d8, Notice d6, Stealth d6, Brave, Hold the Line!

Italian Infantryman

The bulk of Italy's soldiers are from the poor farming country of the south, which means they are almost a different nationality from their commanders. The mismatch cripples Italian morale and plants the seeds of postwar political upheavals.

Italian Small Arms

Type/Caliber	Range	Damage	RoF	AP	Shots	Weight
Pistols						
Glisenti 1910 9mm <i>Notes:</i> Semi-auto	10/20/40	2d6-1	1	—	7	1
M1917 .45 <i>Notes:</i> Revolver	12/24/48	2d6+1	1	—	6	2.5
Rifles						
Carcano 6.5mm <i>Notes:</i> AP 1	24/48/96	2d8-1	1	1	6	8
M1870/87 Vetterli 10.4mm <i>Notes:</i> Min. Str d6	24/48/96	2d8-1	1	—	4	10
Submachine Guns						
Beretta Modello 1918 9mm <i>Notes:</i> Auto, 1918 only	12/24/48	2d6	3	—	25	7
Machine Guns						
Fiat-Revelli Modello 1914 6.5mm <i>Notes:</i> Auto, May not move	30/60/120	2d8	2	1	50	80
Perino Modello 1908 6.5mm <i>Notes:</i> Auto, May not move	24/48/96	2d8	3	1	25	60

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Throwing d6

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Edges & Hindrances: —

Gear: Uniform, canteen, steel helmet (+1), Lebel rifle, 2× grenades, spade, gas mask.

- *Seasoned:* Vigor d8, Survival d6, Blood and Guts, Dig In!
- *Veteran:* Fighting d8, Stealth d8, Survival d8, Combat Reflexes, Incoming!

Italian Alpine Soldier

The elite of the Italian army, the alpini are trained and equipped for mountain fighting. All are assumed to be Seasoned troops, particularly at the start of the war. They suffer horrible casualties fighting the Austrians, but the survivors are formidable indeed.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Survival d6, Throwing d6

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: —

Edges: Brave, Marksman

Gear: Uniform, canteen, steel helmet (+1), Carcano rifle, 2× grenades, spade, gas mask.

- *Veteran:* Fighting d8, Stealth d8, Shooting d8, Dig In!, Incoming!

Weapons and Equipment

Italy's auto industry produces some excellent armored cars, of which the Lancia is the most common. German and Austrian units use some captured ones. It mounts a large turret with two machine guns, with a smaller turret atop the large one holding a single gun.

Type: Armored Car; **Acc/Top Speed:** 5/25; **Toughness:** 12/12/12 (1/1/1); **Crew:** 6 (Commander, driver, mechanic, 3 gunners)

Notes: Heavy Armor

Weapons:

- Two St. Étienne machine guns in lower turret (1,200 rounds each)
- One St. Étienne machine gun in upper turret (1,200 rounds)

Caproni Ca.3 Bomber

Aviation is one area in which Italy has a clear advantage over her Austrian foe. The Italians exploit this by fielding heavy bombers to pulverize the enemy from the air. The Ca.3 is one example, and can also be used as a long-range transport.

Acc/Top Speed: 10/60; **Toughness:** 11; **Crew:** 4 (Pilot, copilot, 2 gunners)

Notes: Aircraft (Climb 0). Flight range of 600 miles.

Armament: Fiat-Revelli machine gun in nose (200 rounds), another in a ring mount atop the fuselage (200 rounds)

Ordnance: 1,800 lbs. of bombs

Variants: Airliner version carries 10 passengers.

Macchi M.5 Fighter

An unusual amphibian fighter plane, the M.5 can operate from any calm body of water. It's used as an interceptor and scout plane over the Alps and Adriatic, but its ability to operate free of airfields makes it useful for expeditions beyond Europe.

Acc/Top Speed: 15/90; **Toughness:** 6; **Crew:** 1

Notes: Aircraft (Climb 0). Flight range of 400 miles, can only land on water.

Armament: Twin .303 machine guns in nose (250 rounds each)

Italian Military Ranks

Rank	Italian Army	Italian Navy
E-1	Soldato	Mozzo
E-2	Soldato	Marinaio
E-3	Caporale	Marinaio Scelto
E-4	Caporale Maggiore	Secondo Capo
E-5	Sergente	—
E-6	Sergente Maggiore	Capo di Seconda Classe
E-7	—	Capo di Prima Classe
E-8	—	—
E-9	Maresciallo	—
O-1	Tenente	Sottotenente di Vascello, Guardiamarina
O-2	Capitano	Tenente di Vascello
O-3	Maggiore	Capitano di Corvetta
O-4	Tenente Colonello	Capitano di Frigata
O-5	Colonello	Captano di Vascello
O-6	Brigadier Generale	Contrammiraglio
O-7	Maggior Generale	Contrammiraglio di Divisione
O-8	Tenente Generale di Corpo d'Armato	Vice-Ammiraglio di Squadra
O-9	Tenente Generale di Armato	Vice-Ammiraglio d'Armata
O-10	Generale d'Esercito	Ammiraglio

Belgian Military Ranks

Rank	Belgian Army	Force Publique
E-1	—	Askari
E-2	Gendarme	—
E-3	Caporal	Caporal
E-4	Sergent	Sergent
E-5	Premier Sergent	Premier Sergent
E-6	Premier Sergent-Major	Premier Sergent-Major
E-7	—	—
E-8	Adjutant	—
E-9	—	—
O-1	Lieutenant, Sous-Lieutenant	Lieutenant
O-2	Capitain	Capitain
O-3	Commandant	Commandant
O-4	Major	Major
O-5	Lieutenant Colonel	—
O-6	Colonel	Colonel
O-7	General Major	—
O-8	Lieutenant-General	—

Belgium

"There is no doubt that our invasion of Belgium, with violation it entailed of that country's sovereign neutrality, and of treaties we ourselves had signed, and the world had respected for a century, was an act of the gravest political significance."

—Prince von Bulow

The land ruled by Belgium is the traditional battleground of Europe, and the Kingdom of Belgium was founded as a neutral state. Neutral doesn't mean passive, however: when the Germans try to use Belgium as an invasion corridor to attack France, King Albert and his government stubbornly resist. The Kaiser's forces overrun all but a tiny corner of the country, but the Belgian Army keeps fighting.

Even though it's a tiny country, Belgium rules a gigantic colonial empire in the Congo basin, rich in rubber, diamonds, metals, and tropical woods. Belgian colonial rule there is notorious for its

brutality. The strong arm of Belgian rule in the Congo is the "Force Publique," an army of African troops and white mercenaries. What they lack in military skill they make up for in sheer ruthlessness. Even though the home country is occupied for four years, Belgium's grip on the Congo is as strong as ever.

Belgian equipment is French-supplied. Force Publique troops in Africa get British gear once Belgium is occupied.

Belgian Officer

Belgium's officer corps is small but includes men with experience earned campaigning in Africa. They and their men never forget they are fighting to liberate their homeland.

Belgian troops adopt helmets and gas masks in 1915.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Knowledge (Battle) d6, Notice d6, Riding d6, Shooting d6

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: —

Edges: Rank (Officer)

Gear: Uniform, canteen, steel helmet (+1), Browning M1900 pistol, gas mask.

- *Seasoned:* Smarts d8, Knowledge (Battle) d8, Persuasion d6, Brave, Command
- *Veteran:* Fighting d8, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Blood and Guts, Inspire

Belgian Infantryman

Belgium's army began the war as a force of "chocolate soldiers" disregarded by the war plans of the great powers. They surprise the world by holding off the Germans, and show unusual determination throughout the war. After the fall

Belgian Small Arms

Type/Caliber	Range	Damage	RoF	AP	Shots	Weight
Pistols						
Browning M1900 .32 ACP	12/24/48	2d6-1	1	—	7	1
<i>Notes:</i> Semi-auto						
Rifles						
Albini M1867 11mm	20/40/80	2d8-1	1	1	1	9
<i>Notes:</i> Snapfire, Min. Str d6, Force Publique						
Mauser M1889 7.65mm	24/48/96	2d8	1	2	5	9
<i>Notes:</i> Min. Str d6						

of Belgium all Belgian troops are at least Seasoned. They start the war without helmets or gas masks, but adopt them along with the French.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Throwing d6

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Edges & Hindrances: —

Gear: Uniform, canteen, steel helmet (+1), Mauser M1889 rifle, 2× grenades, spade, gas mask. Infantry uses the French Chauchat and Hotchkiss machine guns.

- *Seasoned:* Spirit d8, Shooting d8, Survival d4, Brave, Elan
- *Veteran:* Fighting d8, Stealth d8, Survival d6, Blood and Guts, Incoming!

Force Publique Officer

The officers of Belgium's colonial army are recruited from all over Europe, though the highest positions are reserved for Belgian citizens. They are pure mercenaries, fighting to get their share of the Congo's loot.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Survival d6

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: —

Edges: Rank (Officer)

Gear: Uniform, canteen, sun helmet, Browning M1900 pistol.

- *Seasoned:* Vigor d8, Healing d6, Knowledge (Battle) d6, Knowledge (Congo tribes) d6, Linguist
- *Veteran:* Smarts d8, Shooting d8, Danger Sense, No Mercy

Force Publique Askari

Belgian colonial policy favors men from the smaller, more warlike tribes, arming and training them to keep the larger societies of the Congo under control. Their officers encourage them to be harsh to the Congolese, and rebellion is punished with burned villages, beatings, and massacres. The soldiers are feared and hated, which means that they must be loyal to the Belgians.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Survival d6

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Illiterate

Edges: —

Gear: Uniform, canteen, Albin M1867 rifle.

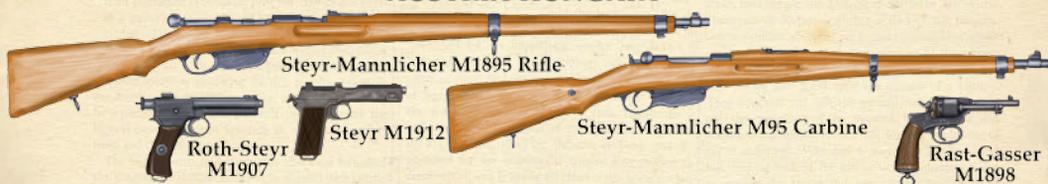
- *Seasoned:* Vigor d8, Fighting d8, Tracking d6, Fleet-Footed
- *Veteran:* Agility d8, Strength d8, Boating d6, Shooting d8, Scavenger

The crew readies an 18-pound cannon for battlefield action.



Standard Weapon Issue by Nation

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY



BELGIUM



FRANCE



GERMANY



ITALY



RUSSIA



Mosin-Nagant M91/30

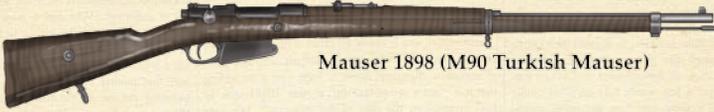


Nagant
M1895



M1917
Smith & Wesson
.44 Revolver

TURKEY



Mauser 1898 (M90 Turkish Mauser)

UNITED KINGDOM



Lee-Enfield Mk I



Webley Mk VI
Top-Break Revolver

UNITED STATES



M1903 Springfield Rifle



Colt M1911
Automatic



Smith & Wesson
Model 10



Colt M1917



M1918 Browning
Automatic Rifle (BAR)

(VARIOUS)



Maxim Machine Gun
(sample variant: Maschinengewehr 08 - Germany)

Chapter Five: The Central Powers

The German Empire

"One day the great European War will come out of some damned foolish thing in the Balkans."

—Otto von Bismarck, German Chancellor

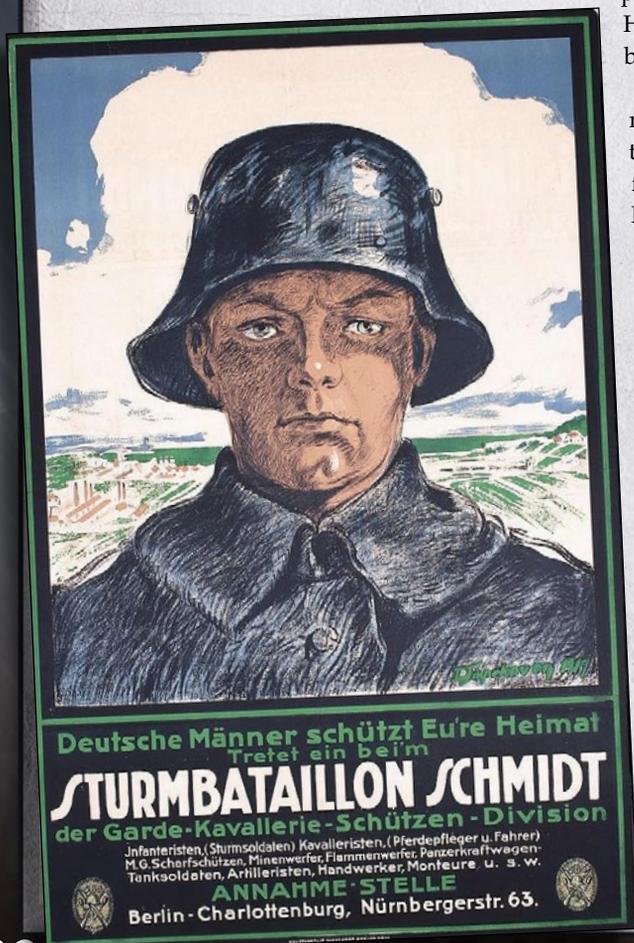
The German Empire is the youngest of Europe's major powers, less than 50 years old. It is a federation of kingdoms under the rule of Kaiser Wilhelm II, the German Emperor (the monarchs of Bavaria, Saxony, Hesse, Wurttemberg, and

other regions get very unhappy if you call him the "Emperor of Germany"). Wilhelm is also King of Prussia, and Prussia dominates the new empire both politically and economically.

Germany's system of government was designed by the political mastermind Otto Von Bismarck to maximize his own influence. At the time, it worked perfectly because in 1871 Germany had a passive Kaiser and an active, brilliant Chancellor in Bismarck himself. By 1914 Germany has a passive Chancellor (Theobald von Bethmann-Hollweg) and an active Kaiser who isn't as brilliant as he thinks he is.

Germany's leaders are so confident in their nation's growing power that they fail to prevent their two arch-enemies France and Russia from forming an alliance. When Archduke Franz Ferdinand's assassination ignites the European tinderbox, the German leadership scramble to fight a war on two fronts. Their initial confidence is shattered when the Schlieffen Plan fails, and afterward they struggle to find a way to win the war before popular discontent boils over into revolution.

The civilian government becomes increasingly irrelevant as the war goes on. More and more power flows to the General Staff as wartime emergency measures put virtually every aspect of German life under military control. At the outset of war the Chief of Staff is Helmuth von Moltke, known as "Moltke the younger" to avoid confusion with his grandfather, the architect of German victory in the Franco-Prussian war of 1871. More than a few people suspect this Moltke got his job because the Kaiser was blinded by the elder Moltke's reputation. As the Schlieffen Plan falls apart, so does Moltke, and by October 1914 he is replaced by General Erich von Falkenhayn.





Falkenhayn is wary of getting sucked deep into Russia, so he concentrates on finding a way to knock France out of the war and perhaps negotiate peace with the Tsar. Falkenhayn tries to make use of Germany's manpower advantage to grind France down in a battle of attrition at Verdun, but ultimately the price proves too high. In the summer of 1916 Falkenhayn takes up a field command and Hindenburg becomes Chief of Staff.

Paul von Hindenburg is legendary for his victory over the Russians at Tannenberg, but the key to his success is his partnership with General Erich Ludendorff. Hindenburg provides the authority and popularity, while Ludendorff is the brains of the team. As the war goes on Hindenburg even eclipses the Kaiser as the symbol of Germany in the minds of the citizenry. He seems to embody all the best Prussian traditions and values. The team of Hindenburg and Ludendorff have virtually unlimited power within Germany until the end of the war.

The German Army

The bedrock of the German Empire is its Army. The Heer is actually a composite force, made up of the separate armies of Germany's component kingdoms. But in the decades since unification the high command has fused these disparate parts into a uniform, efficient machine. Their regimental badges may say Bavaria or Baden, but that's the only difference.

The smallest unit of the German Army is the eight-man squad commanded by a lance-corporal. Two squads make a 20-man section, with a corporal or sergeant in charge. Four sections combined make up a platoon, under a lieutenant. Three platoons make up a 250-man

company, commanded by a captain (later in the war lieutenants sometimes lead companies). A German infantry battalion consists of four infantry companies plus a machine-gun company, all under the command of a major. Three battalions make a regiment, under a colonel or lieutenant-colonel. So at the start of the war a German regiment has about 4,000 men, much larger than its French and British counterparts.

As the war goes on, the army adds more firepower. Each company gains two machine-gun sections, with three light machine guns each. A late war company has five officers and 259 men. (In theory, that is. In practice few units are at full strength.) However, battalions have only three companies in 1918, so regiments are smaller.

Storm Battalions

By 1916 the German Army has special Assault companies, the famous "Storm Troopers" who captivate the imagination of war-weary citizens. Storm troopers work in three-man teams. One man carries a portable steel shield, the second has a bag of grenades, and the third is a hand-to-hand specialist with a trench knife or bayonet.

Assault companies typically have 120 men organized in three platoons. The platoons are often detached, working with a conventional infantry regiment. Storm troopers work forward and breach the enemy line, while the regulars follow.

Four Assault companies make up a *Sturmabteilung*, which also has a light field-gun section, a mortar section, a flamethrower section, and an extra machine-gun company. Each German Field Army has one *Sturmabteilung*, and as noted the troops usually work in detached platoons.

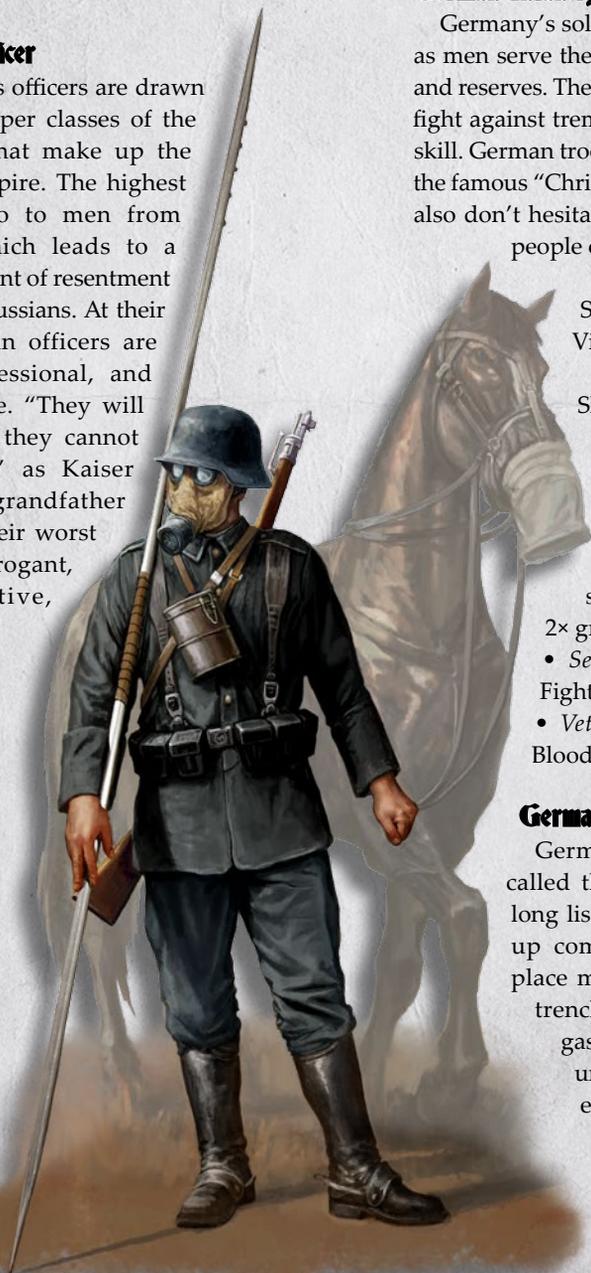
Cavalry

The German cavalry is technically organized in cavalry divisions, but in practice each infantry division has two or three cavalry squadrons attached to it for use in patrolling, scouting, carrying messages, and occasionally fighting dismounted in the trenches. Later in the war the attached cavalry is reduced to just one squadron. A cavalry squadron is four officers commanding 163 men. Squadrons are divided into three "troops" equivalent to platoons.

By the end of the war most cavalry lose their horses entirely and are organized as infantry, replacing veteran infantry units in quiet trench sectors.

German Officer

Germany's officers are drawn from the upper classes of the kingdoms that make up the German Empire. The highest positions go to men from Prussia, which leads to a certain amount of resentment from non-Prussians. At their best, German officers are brave, professional, and incorruptible. "They will not lie and they cannot be bought," as Kaiser Wilhelm's grandfather put it. At their worst they are arrogant, unimaginative, and stodgy.



Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Knowledge (Battle) d6, Riding d6, Shooting d6

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: —

Edges: Upper Class, Rank (Officer)

Gear: Uniform, field glasses, steel helmet (+1), Luger P08 pistol.

- *Seasoned:* Spirit d8, Knowledge (Battle) d8, Command, Brave
- *Veteran:* Smarts d8, Stealth d6, Combat Reflexes, Natural Leader

German Infantryman

Germany's soldiers come from all walks of life, as men serve their mandatory terms in the army and reserves. They are extremely well-trained, and fight against tremendous odds with bravery and skill. German troops are surprisingly sentimental; the famous "Christmas truce" was their idea. They also don't hesitate to enact reprisals against the people of occupied territories.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Throwing d6

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Edges & Hindrances: —

Gear: Uniform, canteen, steel helmet (+1), Gewehr 98 rifle, 2× grenades, spade, gas mask.

- *Seasoned:* Spirit d8, Shooting d8, Fighting d8, Combat Reflexes, Dodge
- *Veteran:* Stealth d8, Survival d8, Blood and Guts, Incoming!

German Pioneer

German field engineer troops are called the Pioneer Corps, and have a long list of jobs. They dig trenches, set up communication and power lines, place mines, operate searchlights, fire trench mortars, and control poison gas projectors. Pioneers dig tunnels under enemy lines and sometimes engage in vicious battles below ground. A handful of Pioneers get assigned to German tanks late in the war. At the start of the war each Army Corps has a battalion of four Pioneer

companies, with 250 men per company. By 1917 there's a Pioneer battalion attached to each division.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Knowledge (Construction) d6, Knowledge (Demolitions) d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Edges & Hindrances: —

Gear: Uniform, canteen, steel helmet (+1), Gewehr 98 rifle, 2× grenades, spade, gas mask.

- *Seasoned:* Spirit d8, Fighting d8, Repair d6, Demo Man, Dig In!
- *Veteran:* Agility d8, Repair d8, Stealth d6, Blood and Guts, Incoming!

German Storm Trooper

Storm troopers are hand-picked troops, chosen for courage, initiative, and physical fitness. They are all Seasoned or better quality. Storm troopers are trained in infiltration tactics. They cross No Man's Land by stealth in small groups, fight hand-to-hand or with grenades, and bypass enemy strong points to penetrate behind the lines and cause maximum disruption.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d8, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Throwing d8

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: —

Edges: Dodge, No Mercy

Gear: Uniform, canteen, steel helmet (+1), Gewehr 98 rifle (or MP18 if 1918), bag of 12× grenades, trench knife (Str+d4+1, AP 1), gas mask.

- *Veteran:* Stealth d8, Shooting d8, Combat Reflexes, Incoming!

East African Schutztruppe

In German East Africa (later known as Tanzania) the German colonial government maintains a force of African soldiers under German officers. The force's original purpose is simply to keep order and put down rebellions, but when the empires of Europe go to war, the African troops suddenly find themselves battling invasion. They rise to the occasion admirably, and end the war as Germany's only undefeated military force.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Survival d6

German Military Ranks

Rank	Army	Navy
E-1	Soldat (or type)	Matrose 3 or 4 Klasse
E-2	Gefreiter	Matrose 2 Klasse
E-3	Unteroffizier	Matrose 1 Klasse
E-4	Sergeant	Quartiermeister
E-5	Vizefeldwebel	Bootsmannsmaat
E-6	Feldwebel	Unterbootsmann
E-7	Etatmassige Feldwebel	Stabsbootsmann
E-8	Offizier-Stellvertreter	Oberbootsmann
E-9	Feldwebel-Leutnant	Oberstabsbootsmann
O-1	Oberleutnant/ Leutnant	Oberleutnant zur See/Leutnant zur See
O-2	Hauptmann	Kapitänleutnant
O-3	Major	Korvettenkapitän
O-4	Oberstleutnant	Fregattenkapitän
O-5	Oberst	Kapitan Zur See
O-6	Generalmajor	Konteradmiral
O-7	Generalleutnant	Vizeadmiral
O-8	General (der Infanterie, etc.)	Admiral
O-9	Generaloberst	Generaladmiral
O-10	Generalfeldmarschall	Grossadmiral

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Edges & Hindrances: —

Gear: Uniform, canteen, Gewehr 98 rifle.

- *Seasoned:* Spirit d8, Fighting d8, Shooting d8, Combat Reflexes, Dodge
- *Veteran:* Stealth d8, Survival d8, Blood and Guts, Brave

Weapons and Equipment

Pickelhaube

The iconic headgear of the German army in the Great War, the spike-topped Pickelhaube is almost useless on the battlefield. It's made of stiffened leather or pressed felt, so gives no protection against bullets or shell fragments, and isn't even very good at keeping off the rain. The spike on top does nothing but make the wearer easier to spot. By 1915 few soldiers in combat wear them, and by 1916 only the high command at headquarters still wear them. Weight: 1 lb.

Stahlhelm

Initially developed for the storm troopers, the famous Stahlhelm becomes standard issue by the end of the war and sets the pattern for military headgear for the next century. It provides excellent protection for the head and neck. The helmets have mounting lugs for a protective faceplate, but very few troops actually use them. Weight: 2 lbs.

German Small Arms

Type/Caliber	Range	Damage	RoF	AP	Shots	Weight
Pistols						
Luger P08 9mm <i>Notes: Semi-auto</i>	12/24/48	2d6-1	1	—	8	2
"Artillery" Luger 9mm <i>Notes: Semi-auto, shoulder stock gives Range 20/40/80</i>	12/24/48	2d6-1	1	—	8/32	4
Mauser C96 9mm <i>Notes: Semi-Auto</i>	12/24/48	2d6-1	1	—	10	3
Reichsrevolver 10.6mm <i>Notes: Revolver</i>	12/24/48	2d6	1	—	6	2
Rifles						
Gewehr 98 8mm <i>Notes: Snapfire, Min. Str d6</i>	24/48/96	2d8	1	2	5	9
Mondragón 7mm <i>Notes: Semi-Auto, Min. Str d6, aircrew and naval infantry</i>	20/40/80	2d8	1	2	8/30	9
MP18 9mm <i>Notes: Auto, introduced 1918</i>	12/24/48	2d6	3	—	32	9
Machine Guns						
MG08 7.92mm <i>Notes: Auto, May not move</i>	30/60/120	2d8	3	1	250B	140
MG08/15 7.92mm <i>Notes: Auto, May not move</i>	24/48/96	2d8	3	1	250B	36
Madsen 7.92mm <i>Notes: Auto, Snapfire, Min. Str d8</i>	24/48/96	2d8	3	1	40	22

Special Weapons

Type	Range	Damage	RoF	Weight	Burst
Kleinflammenwerfer Flamethrower <i>Notes: Min. Str d8, one-man version has 6 shots, two-man version has 12 shots, ignores armor</i>	Cone	2d8	1	30/60	—

Artillery

Type/Caliber	Range	Damage	Burst	AP	Reload
21cm Paris Gun <i>Notes: Heavy Weapon</i>	75 miles	6d10	Large	40	15 min
42cm "Big Bertha" <i>Notes: Heavy Weapon</i>	5 miles	5d20	Large	45	8 min

Corpedos

Type	Range	Damage	Burst	Notes
C/06	1 mile/2 miles/4 miles	4d20	Med	AP 30, Heavy Weapon, speed 40

Albatros D.III Fighter

The D.III enters service in late 1916 and for several months gives Germany air superiority over the battlefields of France. They remain in service until the end of the war, and are also used by the Austro-Hungarian army.

Acc/Top Speed: 15/80; **Toughness:** 7 (0); **Crew:** 1
Notes: Aircraft (Climb 1). Flight range of 300 miles.

Armament: Twin MG08/15 machine guns firing forward (250 rounds each)

Fokker Dr.I Triplane

The famous Fokker Triplane is best-known as the mount of Manfred Von Richtoven, a.k.a. the

"Red Baron." He actually scored most of his kills in other aircraft, but his Dreidecker has become an icon. The triplane is more maneuverable than comparable biplanes, but the drag of the extra wing slows it down. They're used in combat from autumn 1917 until the Armistice. When making aerial maneuvers, the pilot of a Dr.I gets a +1 skill bonus.

Acc/Top Speed: 15/84; **Toughness:** 7 (0); **Crew:** 1
Notes: Aircraft (Climb 2). Flight range of 180 miles.

Armament: Twin MG08 machine guns firing forward (250 rounds each)

Fokker E.III Monoplane

The Fokker Eindecker monoplane is the first aircraft with machine guns synchronized with the propellor, so the pilot can line up by eye instead of having to fire a pivot-mounted gun. During the fall and winter of 1915 this gives the Germans a huge advantage in the air. The plane was considered so important German pilots were forbidden to fly them over enemy territory for fear that one might be captured intact.

Acc/Top Speed: 10/64; **Toughness:** 6 (0); **Crew:** 1

Notes: Aircraft (Climb 1). Flight range of 200 miles.

Armament: One MG08 machine gun firing forward (250 rounds)

Gotha G.IV Bomber

Germany comes late to the idea of heavy bomber planes, but by spring of 1917 they have an effective weapon in the Gotha G.IV twin-engine biplane. It's used for battlefield bombing, and in massed raids on London. One of the machine guns is operated by the bombardier, so it can't be fired when the plane is dropping bombs.

Acc/Top Speed: 10/60; **Toughness:** 12 (1); **Crew:** 3 (Pilot, bombardier, gunner)

Notes: Aircraft (Climb -1). Flight range of 500 miles.

Armament: Two pivot-mount MG08/15 machine guns, forward and rear (250 rounds each)

Ordnance: 840 lbs. of bombs

A7V Tank

The General Staff don't think any gadget can win the war, so they're very doubtful about the usefulness of tanks on the battlefield. That changes once British and French armored vehicles show what they can do. The A7V manages to copy most of the flaws of Allied tanks without any of their advantages. It's slow, clumsy, unreliable, and thin-skinned. The huge crews are drawn from different branches of the army, making it hard for them to work together. No wonder German tank crews jump at the chance to swap their A7Vs for captured Mark IV or Renault machines. (The main gun is nearly identical to the British 6-pounder tank gun in Chapter Four.)

Type: Tank; **Acc/Top Speed:** 1/2; **Toughness:** 16 (2); **Crew:** 18 (Commander, driver, mechanic, signalman, 6 machine gunners, 1 main gunner, 7 loaders)

Notes: Heavy Armor, Tracked

Weapons:

- 57mm Maxim-Nordenfolt front (200 rounds)
- 6 MG08 machine guns, top, 2 right, 2 left, rear (10,000 rounds total)

THE PARIS GUN

An extraordinary feat of engineering with almost no military use, the Paris gun is a super long range cannon capable of lobbing shells 75 miles. Without target spotting to zero in on specific buildings, the chance of doing any significant damage is really quite small, but the psychological effect on civilians in the French capital city is the weapon's main purpose.

In the *Weird War*, mad inventors might build even bigger superguns, possibly capable of shelling London, or even hurling shells across the Atlantic Ocean to New York!

Ehrhardt EV/4 Armored Car

A successful late-war armored car design used in the Balkans and on the eastern front during the war, and during the Russian civil war afterwards. Unusual for the time, it has a built-in wireless set with a range of 10 miles.

Type: Armored car; **Acc/Top Speed:** 5/20; **Toughness:** 13 (1); **Crew:** 8 (Commander, driver, mechanic, 3 gunners, loader, wireless operator)

Notes: Heavy Armor

Weapons:

- 3 MG08 machine guns, top, left or right, rear (3,000 rounds total)

U-Boat

The Kaiser's navy can't challenge the British on the surface of the seas, but below the waves U-boats can tip the balance. This is the U-20, a pre-war design which sank the Lusitania in 1915. Later submarines have longer range and mounted more torpedo tubes, but are generally similar. The deck gun is equivalent to a 4" naval gun.

Acc/Top Speed: 2/11 (1/7 submerged); **Toughness:** 20; **Crew:** 18

Notes: Heavy Armor, maximum depth 160 feet, range 1,650 miles (80 miles submerged)

Weapons:

- 2 torpedo tubes forward (2 C/06 torpedoes each), 2 torpedo tubes aft (1 C/06 torpedo each)
- 105mm deck gun (300 rounds)

Zeppelin

Count Zeppelin's big airships are perfectly suited for long-range reconnaissance, especially at sea, but the British naval blockade makes that a low priority. Instead the German Navy uses them

German soldiers enjoy some R&R in a trench on the Western front.



as strategic bombers, attacking targets in Britain and France. The goal to make the Allies divert resources for air defense, and to wear down the morale of civilians. This is L19, a P-type Zeppelin built in late 1915. It can reach an altitude of 9,000 feet. The L19 crashes at sea after a raid in 1916, and her crew drown when a British fishing vessel refuses to rescue them. German propaganda plays heavily on the incident.

Acc/Top Speed: 2/44; **Toughness:** 14 (0); **Crew:** 18 (Commander, 2 pilots, navigator, wireless operator, bombardier, 4 mechanics, 4 riggers, 4 gunners)

Notes: Aircraft (Climb -3). Flight range of 280 miles.

Armament: Up to 6 pivot-mount MG08 machine guns, top, 2 forward gondola, 2 rear gondola, tail (250 rounds each)

Ordnance: 3,500 lbs. of bombs

Intelligence and Counterintelligence

German military intelligence is handled by an office reporting directly to the General Staff, known as *Abteilung IIIb*. The head of *Abteilung IIIb* is Colonel Walter Nicolai, a stalwart of the diehard war faction on the General Staff. The office is very good at collecting and analyzing information

from conventional sources; their intercepts of Russian radio traffic help bring about the victory at Tannenberg in 1914.

As the war goes on, *Abteilung IIIb* also takes on counterintelligence functions, working with the Prussian police to identify and catch foreign agents in Germany. Thanks to careful analysis they are very successful at this task as well. By the end of the war *Abteilung IIIb* has charge of press censorship, domestic political espionage, and propaganda.

When it comes to foreign intelligence, the German secret service isn't nearly as successful. Its agents overseas tend to be flamboyant eccentrics motivated by ego or hatred of the Allied powers, which limits their effectiveness. The more successful intelligence agents are members of the global German business community, particularly in the Americas and Asia.

Agents of an organization called the *Abteilung zur Weiterentwicklung Spezieller Waffen und Truppen* (Department of Special Weapons and Troop Development) roam the frontlines as early as 1914. Despite the bland name of their organization, rumors soon swirl that they investigate strange occurrences and develop methods to either destroy or exploit that weirdness for the Kaiser.

The Austro-Hungarian Empire

Once the mightiest state in Europe, the Austro-Hungarian Empire of the Habsburgs is struggling to modernize and keep up with its rivals. Even minor powers like Italy and Serbia are snapping at the borders. However, the arms factories in Bohemia are among Europe's biggest, and the Empire has a large population to draw on for soldiers. Its borders are anchored strongly in mountain terrain, so on defense the Austrians are quite formidable. Their offensives against Russia are less successful. As long as the strife among Germans, Slavs, Hungarians, and other groups doesn't explode into revolution, Austria-Hungary can be a dangerous opponent.

Austria-Hungary's "Royal and Imperial Army" is handicapped by the empire's patchwork nature; there are more than a dozen languages, and often it's literally impossible for officers to communicate with their men beyond simple one-word commands. Since half the troops are Slavs in a war against Slavic Russia and Serbia, morale is poor and discontent grows throughout the war.

The commander-in-chief is Emperor Franz Josef himself, though at 84 years of age the Emperor can't do much beyond approving the plans of his Chief of Staff, Count Franz Conrad von Hötzendorf.

The smallest unit of the Austro-Hungarian army is a four-man squad led by a Korporal or Zugsführer. The troops carry Mannlicher rifles. Four squads make a 20-man platoon, or Zug, under a Leutnant. This makes Austrian platoons smaller than most other armies' equivalent units.

Four platoons make a company. An Austro-Hungarian company consists of 80–90 soldiers and NCOs under four officers, with a Hauptmann (Captain) in command. Each battalion contains four companies and is led by a Major or Oberstleutnant. Four battalions make up a regiment, commanded by an Oberst (Colonel).

At the start of the Great War a typical regiment also has a two-gun machine-gun section, with three men per gun. They use Schwarzlose M.07/12 machine guns, or German-built MG08 guns. As in other armies, as the war goes on the number of machine guns increases. Late-war Austrian units have a four-gun machine-gun section attached to each battalion, so each company has a machine gun.

Austrian Small Arms

Type/Caliber	Range	Damage	RoF	AP	Shots	Weight
Pistols						
Rast-Gasser 8mm <i>Notes: Revolver</i>	12/24/48	2d6	1	—	8	1
Roth-Steyr 8mm <i>Notes: AP 1, Semi-auto</i>	12/24/48	2d6+1	1	1	10	2
Rifles						
Steyr-Mannlicher 1895 8mm <i>Notes: AP 2, Snapfire, Min. Str d6</i>	24/48/96	2d8	1	2	5	9
Steyr-Mannlicher Carbine 8mm	20/40/80	2d8–1	1	—	5	8
Submachine Guns						
Schwarzlose M07/12 8mm <i>Notes: AP 2, Auto, May not move</i>	30/60/120	2d8	3	2	250B	90
Skoda M1909 8mm <i>Notes: AP 2, Auto, May not move</i>	30/60/120	2d8	3	2	250B	90

Special Weapons

Type	Range	Damage	RoF	AP	Weight	Burst
Infantry Gun						
M.15 Infanteriegeschütze 37mm <i>Notes: Heavy Weapon, Carried by 3 men or dog cart</i>	40/80/160	3d6	1	2	170	Small

Artillery

Type/Caliber	Range	Damage	Burst	AP	Reload
M.16 Luftminenwerfer 12cm <i>Notes: Heavy Weapon</i>	—/100/200	4d8	Med	1	5 rounds
Skoda M.16 Howitzer 38cm <i>Notes: Heavy Weapon</i>	10 miles	5d20	Large	40	5 min.

Austro-Hungarian Military Ranks

Rank	Army	Navy
E-1	Infanterist, Dragonier, Jäger, etc.	Matrose 2 Klasse
E-2	Gefreiter	Matrose 1 Klasse
E-3	Korporal	Quartiermeister
E-4	Zugsführer	Bootsmannsmaat
E-5	Feldwebel, Wachtmeister	Unterbootsmann
E-6	Kadett	Bootsmann
E-7	Stabs-Feldwebel	Stabsbootsmann
E-8	Offiziersstellvertreter	Oberstabsbootsmann
O-1	Oberleutnant/ Leutnant	Fregattenleutnant/ Korvettenleutnant
O-2	Hauptmann/ Rittmeister	Linienschiffsleutnant
O-3	Major	Korvettenkapitän
O-4	Oberstleutnant	Fregattenkapitän
O-5	Oberst	Linienschiffskapitän
O-6	Generalmajor	—
O-7	Feldmarschalleutnant	Kontreadmiral
O-8	Général der Infanterie, Kavallerie, etc.	Vizeadmiral
O-9	Generaloberst	Admiral
O-10	Feldmarschall	Grossadmiral

Austrian Officer

Austria's officer corps is solidly aristocratic, and wildly variable in actual military talent. Commanders are mostly Austrian, with just enough Hungarians to preserve Imperial unity. Czech or Slavic officers are rare to nonexistent; although Czechs from the industrial areas are very common as NCOs. Tremendous casualties among the officer class in the early part of the war means that after 1915 Austrian units are often led by German commanders.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Knowledge (Battle) d6, Riding d6, Shooting d6

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: —

Edges: Upper Class, Rank (Officer)

Gear: Uniform, steel helmet (+1), pistol.

- *Seasoned:* Spirit d8, Knowledge (Battle) d8, Command, Brave
- *Veteran:* Smarts d8, Stealth d6, Combat Reflexes, Natural Leader

Austrian Infantryman

Austria's soldiers come from any of a dozen nationalities and languages, and often find the enemy less foreign than their commanders and messmates. They may have doubts about fighting

for the King-Emperor, but they'll do what it takes to get home alive.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Throwing d6

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5;

Toughness: 5

Hindrances: —

Edges: Dig In!

Gear: Uniform, steel helmet (+1), Mannlicher rifle.

• *Seasoned:* Vigor d8, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Incoming!, No Mercy

• *Veteran:* Agility d8, Fighting d8, Survival d6, Blood and Guts, Dodge

Austrian Cavalry

Austria's cavalry are famous for their exotic and colorful uniforms, their elaborate mustaches, and their reckless bravery. In the Great War cavalry serve on the open plains of Russia as scouting troops and a mobile reserve. They are slow to

switch to field gray clothing, but do most of their fighting as mounted infantry.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Riding d6, Shooting d6

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: —

Edges: Brave

Gear: Uniform, steel helmet (+1), carbine.

- *Seasoned:* Agility d8, Riding d8, Shooting d8, Survival d6, Beast Bond
- *Veteran:* Vigor d8, Stealth d6, Throwing d6, Blood and Guts, Incoming!

Austrian Jäger

The mountains that form a natural rampart around Franz Josef's empire require special troops to defend. Men from the forested mountain country of the Austrian Tyrol are recruited into special Tyrolian Jäger units, which specialize in mountain fighting. They wear distinctive green bowler-style hats with a plume (until they adopt the more practical Stahlhelm).

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: —

Edges: Alertness

Gear: Uniform, steel helmet (+1), rifle.

- *Seasoned:* Vigor d8, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Survival d6, Marksman
- *Veteran:* Spirit d8, Fighting d8, Stealth d8, Blood and Guts, Combat Reflexes

Weapons and Equipment

In addition to the gear described below, the Austro-Hungarian army uses large amounts of German-built equipment. Just about any piece of German hardware can turn up in the hands of an Austrian unit, especially on the Russian front where the two armies fight side by side.

Intelligence and Counterintelligence

Austria's spy service is the *Evidenzbureau*, the oldest permanent military intelligence service in Europe. In peacetime it's attached to the Foreign Ministry, but reports to the General Staff once war breaks out. During the first three years of war the *Evidenzbureau's* director is Col. Oskar Hranilovic von Czvetassin; Col. Maximilian Ronge takes over in 1917 and remains in charge until the Empire disintegrates.

Like its German counterpart, the *Evidenzbureau* is best at collating and analyzing information from public and military sources. Austria's few foreign agents are in Serbia and Russia. Austria recruits Poles to spy on Russia, but since few Poles have positions giving access to sensitive information, their usefulness is limited.

Austrian counterintelligence is poor. Just before the war in 1913, it comes out that the deputy-director of the *Evidenzbureau*, Col. Alfred Redl, has been a Russian double agent for years. Redl commits suicide when the secret is revealed, but the damage to Austrian counterintelligence is severe.

The *Staatspolizei*, or national police, are in charge of stamping out political sedition and rebellion, and take on much of the counterintelligence burden during the war. However the police focus almost exclusively on the Empire's restive nationalities, like Czechs and Slavs, and have only limited success in stopping enemy spies.

Rumors abound of a seldom-seen branch known as the *Schwarzsbureau*. Based somewhere near Prague—if it even exists—this small department supposedly has official authority and archives on weird happenings stretching back to the Middle Ages.

Ottoman Empire

The Ottoman Empire has ties of friendship and longstanding hostility to powers on both sides in the Great War. France and Germany are important commercial partners, and Germany has offered lots of help in modernizing the Turkish Army. The Ottomans have ancient feuds with both Austria-Hungary and Russia, and for a century has been nervous about growing British influence in the Middle East. High-handed British treatment of the Turks in the opening weeks of the war tips the balance, and the Ottoman government joins the Central Powers.

The Ottoman Empire is struggling to modernize its army and economy, to avoid being swallowed up by one of Europe's colonial empires.

The ruler of the Ottoman Empire is Sultan Mehmed V, who has been on the throne since 1909. Before taking the throne he spent his entire life inside the Topkapi Palace in Constantinople. He is an accomplished poet and knows practically nothing about government or the world beyond the walls of his palace. Mehmed V claims the title of Caliph, spiritual successor to the Prophet Muhammad, though many other Muslim rulers refuse to acknowledge his claim.

The head of government is Said Halim Pasha, the Grand Vizier, but the real power in the Turkish state lies with a militaristic movement called the

Turkish Military Ranks

Rank	Turkish Army	Turkish Navy
E-1	Nefer	Gedikli Erbash
E-2	Onbashi	Gedikli Er
E-3	Gedikli Onbashi	Gedikli Onbashi
E-4	Cavus	Gedikli Cavus
E-5	Muavini	—
E-6	Bascavus Muavini	Gedikli Bascavus Muavini
E-7	Bascavus	Gedikli Bascavus
E-8	—	Basgedikli
E-9	—	—
O-1	Tegmen	Mulazim
O-2	Yuzbashi	Yuzbashi
O-3	Binbashi	Korvet Kaptani
O-4	Yarbay	Firkateyn Kaptani
O-5	Albay	Kalyon Kaptani
O-6	Tug-General	Liva Amiral
O-7	Tum-General	—
O-8	Kor-General	Ferik Amiral
O-9	Or-General	Birinci Ferik Amiral
O-10	Buyuk-General	Musir Amiral

Committee of Union and Progress. The leader of the CUP is Ismail Enver, known as Enver Pasha, who holds the position of Minister of War and is de facto ruler of the Ottoman Empire. Enver is strongly pro-German, which leads him to join the Central Powers expecting a quick victory over Russia. What he gets is four years of war and increasing dependence on German aid to hold the Ottoman Empire together.

Military forces of the Ottoman Empire are organized on the German model, but don't have as much heavy firepower. Each regiment has only four machine guns (and many are under-equipped).

Ottoman Empire Officer

Turkish officers are patriotic and favor modernization. They want Turkey to be a European Great Power like Germany, instead of a decaying Asian monarchy. Some owe their position to connections at court, but most have worked their way up through the ranks by talent and effort. Promising officers have been trained in Germany or France and can rival their Russian counterparts in efficiency.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Knowledge (Battle) d6, Riding d6, Shooting d6

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: —

Edges: Command, Rank (Officer)

Gear: Uniform, canteen, Mauser or Luger pistol, sun helmet or fez.

- *Seasoned:* Spirit d8, Knowledge (Battle) d8, Notice d6, Brave, Command Presence

- *Veteran:* Vigor d8, Stealth d6, Combat Reflexes, Natural Leader

Ottoman Empire Askeri

Turkish soldiers are drawn from all over the Ottoman Empire, but only Muslim men can serve in the army. Few can read, but they are famed for physical courage. They put up with short supplies, harsh conditions, and extremely brutal discipline.

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Fighting d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Throwing d6

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5

Hindrances: Illiterate

Edges: Brave

Gear: Uniform, canteen, Mauser M1893 or Gewehr 98 rifle, spade.

- *Seasoned:* Spirit d8, Fighting d8, Survival d6, Block, Dig In!

- *Veteran:* Vigor d8, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Combat Reflexes, Incoming!

Weapons and Equipment

The Ottoman Empire makes heavy use of German weapons, even before entering the war, but also has some British and American. Officers often carry personal weapons.

Turkish Small Arms

Type/Caliber	Range	Damage	RoF	AP	Shots	Weight
Pistols						
Luger P08 9mm <i>Notes:</i> Semi-auto	12/24/48	2d6-1	1	—	8	2
Mauser C96 7.63mm <i>Notes:</i> Semi-auto	12/24/48	2d6-1	1	—	6	3
Rifles						
Gewehr 98 8mm <i>Notes:</i> Snapfire, Min. Str d6	24/48/96	2d8	1	2	5	9
M1893 Mauser 7.65mm <i>Notes:</i> Snapfire, Min. Str d6	24/48/96	2d8	1	1	5	9
Machine Guns						
Bergmann MG15 7.92mm <i>Notes:</i> Auto, May not move	30/60/120	2d8	3	1	250B	30
MG08 7.92mm <i>Notes:</i> Auto, May not move	30/60/120	2d8	3	1	250B	140
Madsen 7.92mm <i>Notes:</i> Auto, May not move, Min. Str d8	24/48/96	2d8	3	2	40	22

The charge of the British Naval Division, Gallipoli 1915.



Intelligence and Counterintelligence

The Ottoman Empire had a long history of dealing with the paranormal in the various provinces under its control, stretching all the way back to the last days of the Eastern Roman Empire. Just prior to the Great War, a department simply called the Special Organization was formed under advisement of the British government. A variety of men served as the heads of this shadowy organization, with branches throughout the Empire. The SO was implicated in the various genocides that took place during the war, as well as more esoteric activities.

Bulgaria

The only minor power in Europe to throw in with the Central Powers is Bulgaria. Even though it's a Slavic country with close ties to Russia and a long history of warfare with the Turks, the Bulgarian government hopes to gain some Serbian or Greek territory (and is terrified of being crushed between its powerful neighbors if it sides with the Allies).

Bulgaria's army is modeled on Germany's, and participates in the campaign against Serbia. Bulgarian troops carry Russian or Austrian equipment, and use the same templates as Russians.

Chapter Six: A Weird War

There are two main threads of thought on magic in Europe during the Great War. The first is Spiritualism and the second is the “ceremonial” style of “magick” born out of the fin de siècle (literally, “end of the century”) occult revival.

Spiritualism began in upstate New York, USA, in the 1840s and combined tenets of mainstream Protestant Christianity with the belief that certain sensitive individuals (“spirit mediums”) could communicate with the souls of the dead.

The belief boomed in America after the carnage of the Civil War and spread to Europe. A number of leaders and prominent intellectuals were intrigued by Spiritualist ideas. In England, the Psychical Research Society tried to study Spiritualist phenomena scientifically. The late Victorian occult boom included the revival of the Rosicrucians in France, the founding of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn in 1888, and the birth of the New Templar Order in 1907. Several leading French occultists visited Russia during the period, inspiring occult study groups there as well.

The Golden Dawn is the best-known occult society of the period and serves as a model for similar groups in other countries. It was founded by Samuel MacGregor Mathers, William R. Woodman, and William Wynn Westcott in 1888, though Westcott claimed to be in touch with an inner order of “Secret Chiefs” in Germany. (In the world of *Weird War I*, that inner order is in fact the Sons of Solomon.) Members include the poet W.B. Yeats, Aleister Crowley, A.E. Waite, and Arthur Machen.

Golden Dawn members choose a “magical name” which represents a kind of mystical rebirth, typically in Latin. Aleister Crowley, for instance, is “Fratr Perdurabo.” They also select a motto.

The magical theory of the Golden Dawn combines strains of traditional European magic, the Hermetic occultism of the Renaissance,

Spiritualism, Freemasonry, Madame Blavatsky’s Theosophy, ancient Egyptian religion, Tibetan Buddhism, and Hindu religion. Magical “workings” are elaborate ceremonies with a number of participants in elaborate costumes. Often they are held on astrologically significant dates and might need to be repeated several times over the course of a year to be fully effective. For game purposes, see the rules for the Arcane Background (Ceremonial Magic) Edge below.

By the outbreak of the Great War, the Golden Dawn is fractured by personality conflicts. A.E. Waite is generally recognized as the leader of the “mainstream” Golden Dawn, but Aleister Crowley broke away in 1900 to form his own group, the Astrum Argentum. (In *Weird War I*, Crowley’s group are working to bring about a “revolution in reality” which will make a new world of magic, freedom, and madness.) Crowley himself has ties to British Intelligence outside of Conan Doyle’s MI-13 group.

Encounters in Darkness

Most scoff at the supernatural in broad daylight or polite company, but at night in their manors, flats, or trenches is a different story.

With war on a global scale, more than a few soldiers and civilians have seen strange things with their own eyes. Belief in the supernatural increases and gives rise to even new horrors as the dark energy draws these fears from the minds of men.

Most who encounter such horrors perish; many go mad. But a select few run toward the darkness, sating curiosity or braving the foul depths to learn secrets previously believed impossible—and use it against the monsters of the *Weird Wars*.

Some may join secret societies to gather knowledge while others uncover moldering tomes of power and plumb the secrets on their own.

Arcane Backgrounds

If your character is one of the few who have embraced the paranormal and desires to master its usage, this chapter is for you.

Arcane Backgrounds in *Weird Wars* work mostly like those in the core book, with a few exceptions detailed below. Note that some Arcane Backgrounds have different Requirements as well. Practicing actual magic, for example, requires a Smarts of d8 or higher since spells are much more difficult to cast in this setting. Psionics, however, has no minimum attribute level—meaning those with little education but raw mental energy are unfortunately capable of massive effects.

Trappings: Powers usually have minimal visible effect, though there are a few exceptions. The blatant display of supernatural abilities isn't something most of those who tamper with such forces desire. Paranoid allies might shoot on the spot, and the shadowy MI-13 won't tolerate those who risk panicking the regulars.

Arcane Background (Magic)

Requirements: Novice, Smarts d8+, Arcane Exposure

Arcane Skill: Spellcasting (Smarts)

Starting Power Points: 10

Starting Powers: 3

Europe saw a revival of interest in occult matters during the last quarter of the 19th Century. Mystics tried to marry the rational, "scientific" mindset of the Victorian Era to the study of occult topics. Groups like the Golden Dawn in Britain, the Rosicrucians in France, and the New Templar Order in Germany developed a comprehensive theory of "magick" but enjoyed little practical success with their complex ceremonies. Now that world war has come, that has changed. It's suddenly easier to create magical effects and people once derided as eccentrics or fakes are in great demand.

Those who have learned the black arts can cast spells as usual. The only difference is Backlash is much more severe in the *Weird Wars*—see below.

See the **Powers Table** for the spells a mage is able to cast in *Weird War I*.

Backlash: Those who roll a 1 on their Spellcasting die suffer 2d6 damage.

Arcane Background (Miracles)

Requirements: Novice, Spirit d8+, Arcane Exposure

Arcane Skill: Faith (Spirit)

Starting Power Points: 10

Starting Powers: 2

Priests, chaplains, nuns, and other "blessed" men and women have real power in the world of *Weird Wars*. They need it, for certainly the powers of darkness are stacked against them.

See the **Powers Table** for allowed abilities.

Arcane Background (Psionics)

Requirements: Novice, Arcane Exposure

Arcane Skill: Psionics (Smarts)

Starting Power Points: 10

Starting Powers: 3

At the start of the Great War, only a few true psychics (or "psis") are acknowledged by their nation's governments. The Western powers are slow to investigate such individuals, but a few Russian standouts such as the so-called "Beast of Moldova" has hastened their program. Currently unnamed, the soon-to-be Soviets will develop the *Byuro Paranormalnib Otnoshenii Sovetskogo Soyuza* before the outbreak of World War II.

For now, such programs are in their infancy—a few promising candidates mentored by guardians of varying caliber.

Arcane Background (Psionics) works as described in *Savage Worlds*. See the Powers Table for a list of available abilities in this setting.

Arcane Background (Weird Science)

Requirements: Novice, Smarts d8+

Arcane Skill: Weird Science (Smarts)

Starting Power Points: 10

Starting Powers: 1

World War I is the first "scientific" war. New weapons are developed and reach the battlefield at a rapid pace. Aircraft, poison gas, submarines, and tanks are the best-known, but inventors come up with ever-stranger weapons. Both the British and Germans research germ warfare, and German agents actually infect US Army horses going overseas with glanders at the port of New York. The 1918 Spanish influenza pandemic is blamed on enemy action, but no one can prove this conclusively.

As the war progresses, the spreading breakdown in reality allows scientists familiar with the arcane to work on inventions which combine the magical and mechanical. Combined with the growing desperation of the military leaders, such weird weapons and devices are more likely to be funded and used.

Arcane Background (Weird Science) works as listed in *Savage Worlds*.

Powers Table

Power	Magic	Miracles	Psionics
Armor	☒	☒	☒
Banish	☒	☒	
Barrier			☒
Beast Friend	☒	☒	☒
Blast			☒
Blind	☒	☒	☒
Bolt			☒
Boost / Lower Trait	☒	☒	☒
Burrow			
Burst			
Confusion	☒	☒	☒
Damage Field			
Darksight	☒	☒	☒
Deflection	☒	☒	☒
Detect / Conceal Arcana	☒		☒
Disguise	☒		☒
Dispel	☒		
Divination	☒	☒	☒
Drain Power Points			
Elemental Manipulation	☒		
Entangle	☒		
Environmental Protection	☒		
Farsight	☒		☒
Fear	☒	☒	☒
Fly			
Greater Healing		☒	
Grave Speak	☒	☒	
Growth / Shrink			
Havoc	☒		☒
Healing		☒	
Intangibility			
Invisibility			
Light / Obscure	☒	☒	
Mind Reading			☒
Pummel	☒		
Puppet	☒		☒
Quickness			
Shape Change			
Slow	☒		☒
Slumber	☒		☒
Smite		☒	
Speak Language	☒	☒	☒
Speed	☒	☒	☒
Spirit Shield	☒	☒	
Stun	☒		☒
Succor		☒	
Summon Ally			
Telekinesis			☒
Teleport			
Wall Walker			
Warrior's Gift	☒	☒	
Zombie	☒		

Powers marked with the cross [☒] may be taken by a character with that Arcane Background.

New Powers

Grave Speak

Rank: Seasoned

Power Points: 4

Range: Touch

Duration: 3 (1/round)

Trappings: Runes carved on bodily remains, black candles, "leather" books, Ouija boards.

It is said the dead know many secrets, and through the black arts a person can reach beyond death to contact departed souls. Though not evil, many good spellcasters avoid using this power for they feel it disturbs those who have earned their rest.

For this spell to work, it must be directed toward a particular soul. The caster must either know the name of the deceased or possess a personal item, which includes a part of their corpse, as well as a treasured item.

If the spell succeeds, a ghostly voice makes itself known and may be questioned. One question may be asked for each round the spell is active. The spirit contacted is not necessarily friendly and can lie, but it may not refuse to answer or make guesses. The War Master must decide what information the entity knows—the spirit is not omniscient and typically knows only what it knew in life up to the moment of its death.

A roll of a 1 on the caster's arcane skill, regardless of Wild Die, summons up a demon

or other hostile entity. While these spirits cannot usually affect the caster when contacted in this way (they're not summoned), it may try to convince him it is the person he sought then feed him inaccurate or dangerous information to lead the character to his death.

Spirit Shield

Rank: Seasoned

Power Points: 3

Range: Smarts

Duration: 3 (1/round)

Trappings: Ring of holy water or salt, wall of energy, sigils inscribed in the air

This spell creates a barrier that can keep out ghosts, poltergeists, and other ethereal entities. It has no effect against demons or undead in physical form. The caster makes his arcane skill roll and then places a Medium Burst Template centered on himself. (A raise increases this to a Large Burst Template.)

Entities wishing to enter the Template must make an opposed Spirit check against the caster's arcane skill. If they fail, they cannot pass the barrier that round.

Spirit shield stops the entity from passing through, but does not prevent it from "normal" actions such as intimidation or throwing physical objects. The spell is negated if any living creature of rat-size or larger that started *inside* the circle crosses to the outside.

Britons bury the dead in a war cemetery in Abbeville, France, 1918.



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The Weird War I Player's Guide contains everything you need to make and equip characters from all the Allied and Central powers. You'll also find a batch of grisly Setting Rules for this most terrible of conflicts, the history of the war, and all the details you need to embrace dark and arcane secrets that may alter the outcome of the War to End All Wars!

Requires the Savage Worlds Core Rules to play, and the War Master needs the Weird War I War Master's Handbook as well.

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