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## History of the Great War, 1914-1918

Carlton J. H. Hayes



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"Self-interest was the dominant note of the years immediately preceding the outbreak of the Great War. In economics and in politics, among individuals, social classes, and nations, flourished a self-interest that tended more and more to degenerate into mere cynical selfishness... There was no international organization. There was no general authority for the determination of disputes and for the regulation of world interests. There were at the opening of the twentieth century some fifty states, in theory absolutely independent, sovereign, and equal. In fact, the fifty were very unequal and even the strongest among them was not strong enough to maintain its independence should the others unite against it. Yet each proceeded to act on the assumption in most cases that it was self-sufficient and that its own self-interest was its supreme guide." - Carlton J. H. Hayes

Contents:

The Great War Comes. The General Cause: International Anarchy. The Immediate Cause: Germany. The Occasion: the Assassination of an Archduke.

Germany Conquers Belgium and Invades France. Mobilization and Strategy. The Conquest of Belgium. The Invasion of France. German Gains in the West – and Failure.

Russia Fails to Overwhelm Germany. The Russian Invasion of East Prussia. The Russian Invasion of Galicia. The German Invasion of Russian Poland. The Security of Serbia.

Great Britain Masters the Seas. Importance of Sea Power. The Participation of Japan. The Conquest of the German Colonies. Turkey's Support of Germany. Germany's Counter-Offensive on the Seas.

The Allies Endeavor to Dominate the Near East. Allied Optimism in the Spring of 1915. The Attack on the Dardanelles. Italy's Entry into the War.

Russia Retreats. Mackensen's Drive: the Austrian Recovery of Galicia. Hindenburg's Drive: the German Conquest of Poland. Revival of Political Unrest in Russia. Failure of the Allies to Relieve Russia.

Germany Masters the Near East. Decline of Allied Prestige. Bulgaria's Entry into the War and the Conquest of Serbia. Failure of the Allies to Relieve Serbia: the Salonica Expedition. Completion of German Mastery of the Near East.

Germany Fails to Obtain a Decision in 1916. Teutonic Optimism at the Beginning of 1916. The Difficulty at Verdun: "They Shall Not Pass". The Difficulty in the Trentino: Italy's Defense. The Difficulty in Ireland: Suppression of Rebellion. Difficulties at Sea: the Grand Fleet and the United States Government.

The Allies Fail to Obtain a Decision in 1916. Attempted Coordination of Allied Plans. Simultaneous Allied Drives: the Somme, the Isonzo, and the Sereth. The Participation and Defeat of Rumania. Stalemate and the Teutonic Peace Drive.

The United States Intervenes. The Stakes: Isolation or a League of Nations? The Occasion: Unrestricted Submarine Warfare. The Problem: Preparedness.

Russia Revolts and Makes "Peace". Destruction of Russian Autocracy: the March (1917) Revolution. Disintegration of Democracy: Political and Military Experiments. Dictatorship of the Bolsheviki: the November (1917) Revolution. Defection of Russia: the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk.

The Allies Pave the Way for Ultimate Victory. Allied Plans and Prospects in 1917. The Lesson of the Hindenburg Line. Recovery of Allied Prestige in the Near East. Seeming Obstacles to Allied Victory. Germany Makes the Supreme Effort. "Whom the Gods Would Destroy". The Drive Against the British: the Battle of Picardy. The Drive Against the French: the Aisne and the Oise. The Drive Against the Italians: the Piave. The Final German Drive: the Second Battle of the Marne. The Allies Triumph and Central Europe Revolts. Allied Victories in the West. Allied Intervention in Russia. Allied Triumph in the Near East:

Surrender of Bulgaria and Turkey.

The Collapse of Austria-Hungary: Resurgence of Oppressed Nationalities. The End of Hostilities: Flight of William II.

A New Era Begins. The Settlement. The Losses. Landmarks of the New Era.

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