

## Fronts of the War

- ✦ Europe in 1914 was rich and powerful
- ✦ Major powers of the continent had virtual control of the world
- ✦ **Fighting a major war among themselves would be suicide**
- ✦ All that they built could be lost

*“The lamps are going out all over Europe; we shall not see them again in our time.”*

*Sir Edward Grey, Britain*



- ✦ Royalty in Europe
  - ✦ Windsor – England – George V
  - ✦ Hohenzollern – Germany – Kaiser Wilhelm II
  - ✦ Habsburg – Austria-Hungary – Franz Joseph
  - ✦ Romanov – Russia – Nicholas II
  - ✦ All but France and Switzerland were monarchies



- ✦ Why did these powers go to war?
  - ✦ Nations had made attempts at peace
    - ✦ 1863-4 **International Red Cross** called for international conference in neutral Switzerland to set **rules for warfare**
    - ✦ **Geneva Convention** called for decent treatment of POW's
      - ✦ Also protect civilians
      - ✦ **Rules for “civilized warfare”**
    - ✦ **Olympic Games** revived (1896) to promote understanding & friendship among nations
      - ✦ Held in **Athens**, Greece
      - ✦ Organized by Frenchman **Baron Pierre de Coubertin**
  - ✦ But...the Euro powers were heavily armed and had scores to settle
  - ✦ No one had experience in huge war
    - ✦ **People excited or relieved at start of war – an adventure!**
    - ✦ Get conflicts settled quickly & move on

- ✦ Germany planned to invade Belgium to get quickly to France
  - ✦ Belgians had a small army – a neutral country
  - ✦ German plan called the Schlieffen Plan
    - ✦ Invade Belgium to rapidly knock out France before Russians fully mobilize
      - ✦ French positions along FR/GR border, not FR/Bel
- ✦ 8/3/14 – GR invades Bel – calls neutrality agreement a “worthless scrap of paper”
  - ✦ Belgium provides unexpected strong resistance – takes Germans 18 days to get to France
    - ✦ As a result – French had time to prepare
      - ✦ Germans got to within 25 miles of Paris
        - ✦ Battle of the Marne (Sept. 6, 1914)
          - ✦ French stop the German advance – Paris saved!
            - ✦ Used taxicabs to rush troops from Paris to the battlefields along the Marne River
              - ✦ Germans forced to pull back
    - ✦ Meanwhile, the Russians mobilized quicker than expected
      - ✦ Invaded Germany from the East
        - ✦ Forced Germans to respond – splitting their forces
          - ✦ Battle of Tannenberg (Aug. 26-30, 1914)
            - ✦ Major defeat for the Russians
  - ✦ After B. of Marne – French couldn’t drive the Germans out & Germans couldn’t drive French back – Stalemate
    - ✦ Leads to trench warfare
  - ✦ The Ottomans joined war in Oct. 1914 - cut off Russia from allies
    - ✦ Getting control of Dardanelles Strait became an allied goal
  - ✦ Italy joined the war as an ally in 1915
    - ✦ Allies promised Italy colonies & land from Austria if they helped
      - ✦ Not much of a fighter
  - ✦ Western Front – a deadlock was formed – no one able to move
    - ✦ Both sides dug miles of deep trenches
      - ✦ Soon stretched from Switzerland to the English Channel
        - ✦ Land in between known as “No-Man’s Land”

