

**Bios of Great War Key Personalities**

**Ready Reckoner for Who was  
Who on the Western Front**

## Ready Reckoner of Who was Who in the Great War

When dealing with a lengthy and complex subject such as the Great War that involves numerous personalities, organisations and institutions, having access to a ready reference source can assist in guiding one along the learning journey.

This document provides brief bios on some of the key personalities in each of the belligerent nations on the Western Front – France, Britain and Germany.

To further assist understanding, the entries are colour coded according to whether the individual / entity functioned in a **'civil'** or a **'military'** capacity.

### Civilian figures and 'civil' organisations

### Military figures and 'military' organisations

### Royal Figures & roles

## The British Political Structure Before and During the Great War

Before and during the Great War Britain had a **parliamentary democracy** that employed the 'Westminster system' (still used in Great Britain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand) where the majority party elected to parliament by enfranchised voters formed the government and cabinet.

The main parties in 1914 were the Tories, Conservatives and Liberals.

In 1914 British parliaments were elected by the **men** of Britain. (Unlike Australia where women were given the right to vote in 1901, British 'suffragettes' would not be given that right until 1923.)

Within Britain's parliamentary democracy, the King (**George V**) was the titular head of State, which meant he acted more as a figurehead and so had much less power in decision making than his cousins **Willy (Willhelm II of Germany)** and **Nicky (Tsar Nicholas II of Russia)**.

However **George V** was influential in decisions made about promotions of some key military appointments (eg Haig).

While the British military contributed 'advice' to policy deliberations, actual decision making was undertaken by the cabinet of the elected government.

The nature and quality of much of the advice given by the British and French military to their democratically elected governments provide for ongoing debate.

## **Britain's Key Political Players In the War**

**Herbert Asquith** – was Prime Minister of the Asquith Liberal Government from the start of the War until December 1916 when he was replaced by a coalition of parties lead by David Lloyd George. Many historians regard him as a ditherer when it came to making important decisions.

**David Lloyd George** – At the start of the War DL was Chancellor of the Exchequer (Treasurer), then following the '**shell shortage scandal**' of 1915 he became an effective **Minister for Munitions**, who finally served from late December 1916 as **British PM** through to the end of the War.

**Sir Edward Grey was the British Foreign Secretary** for the Asquith government before and during the War, and conducted negotiations in the lead up to war with his counter parts in the foreign offices of France, Germany and Russia.

Grey was the primary architect of a British foreign policy that became known as the '**Great Question**'. In the period from 1910 to 1914 the British government adopted a diplomatic stance in pre-war discussions with both France and Germany that in the event of a war between those two countries, Great Britain **MIGHT** support France militarily, but **MIGHT NOT!** This in effect became what was termed '**The Great Question**': In the event of war on the continent, would Britain support France against Germany, or not?

Grey and the Asquith government apparently believed that this (*clever?*) stance of indecisiveness would discourage an outbreak of war between the two major continental powers. This was because they had formed the view that France would not go to war with Germany if she were unsure about having British support. Germany, on the other hand would not be belligerent if she thought her offensive action against France might result in Britain coming to the support of the latter.

As it turned out, Britain's ambivalent pre 1914 foreign policy stance clearly failed to deter the two key continental powers from going to war against each other, as in August 1914 Germany believed that Britain would not enter the War in support of France.

More significantly for Britain herself, the absence of a clear and unequivocal policy with respect to the imminent conflict on the Continent would have catastrophic consequences for the men of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) when the latter were committed to the fray at Mons in Belgium.

However, the arrangement between Britain and France was so informal, right up until Britain actually declared war, that it was not clear just what her role and responsibilities would be in support of France if the latter became involved in a war with Germany.

In fact, Great Britain did not declare war against Germany in support of France, but rather did so in accord with an old and imprecise treaty she had entered with **Belgium** more than 70 years earlier! Which the Germans considered to be “**just a scrap of paper**”.

Sir Edward Grey is noted for the prescient quote he made on 3 August 1914 that ***‘The lamps are going out all over Europe, we shall not see them lit again in our lifetime’***.

**Lord Horatio Kitchener (??) - Secretary of State for War**, which was the civilian head of the **War Office** within the Cabinet, whose role was to advise the government on matters dealing with the British army.

This was only the second time in British history that a **‘serving officer’** was appointed to this key civilian position in a British government. Hence the question marks in the above subheading – did he conduct his role as a ‘civilian’ or as a ‘military officer’? His diaries indicate that he had little time or respect for politicians.

Along with Winston Churchill, Lord K played a key role in promoting the Eastern campaign at Gallipoli, and following the debacle there, lost considerable kudos.

Kitchener would fill the role Secretary of State for War until 5<sup>th</sup> June 1916 on which date he was drowned after his ship to Russia hit a German mine and sank with the loss of virtually all on board.

Following Kitchener’s death the post of Secretary of State for War / Minister for War under the new Coalition government lead by Lloyd George was filled by the **Earl of Derby**.

However because Derby was a committed **‘Westerner’** with close connections to the army high command (including **Douglas Haig and William Robertson**) he was held in suspicion by PM Lloyd George (a keen **‘Easterner’**) and excluded from most inner War Council meetings. This effectively meant that for a considerable and critical period of the War, the key role of **Secretary of State for War** was unable to make a contribution to the thinking and decisions of the War Cabinet.

In early 1918 Derby's opposition to the creation of an **inter-Allied command structure** under Ferdinand Foch within the Supreme War Council led to Lloyd George’s decision to remove him from the war ministry in April 1918, replacing him with **Lord Alfred Milner** who filled the post for the final few months of the conflict and into the post war period.

**Winston Churchill** - The '**Admiralty**' was the corresponding department of state for the **British navy**, whose civilian minister was known as the First Lord of the Admiralty (usually just 'first lord').

The first lord in August 1914 was Winston Churchill, then 39 and the youngest cabinet minister in the Asquith government.

Churchill was a committed 'Easterner' and a key supporter of the Gallipoli Campaign by the Royal Navy – consequently, when the campaign turned into a disaster, Churchill was blamed and subsequently removed from his post.

Winston would subsequently lead a battalion for some months on the Western Front in Belgium, before returning to parliament.

### **Britain's Key Military Players In the War**

Under the Westminster system of government the military leaders of the British navy and army were (and are) subject to the authority of the government Cabinet and the elected Parliament.

The most senior position within the British army during the War was the '**Chief of the Imperial General Staff**' (**CIGS**) who was the professional head of the British, Indian and colonial armies, responsible to the Cabinet via the Secretary of State for War (effectively the Minister for War).

The office of CIGS was located at Whitehall near the British Parliament in London, so that CIGS would be on hand to provide information and advice to the Secretary for State for War and the Cabinet.

As the **head of the British** Army hierarchy CIGS was supported in Whitehall by a number of professional senior army officers and their staffs:

- **The Adjutant General (AG)** - Responsible for personnel matters & the overall welfare of the soldier, visavis recruiting, pay and medical provision.
- **The Quartermaster-general (QMG)** - Responsible for logistic and supply matters within the army – fed, clothed, housed & moved the army. This department had four subsidiary sections (i) transport and remounts (horses), (ii) movements and quartering, (iii) supplies and clothing, and (iv) equipment & ordnance stores.
- **The Master-general of the ordnance (MGO)** - Responsible for the procurement of war materiel such as rifles, ammunition and artillery supplies.

From providing for an army of less than 200,000 in 1914, the officers and staffs in these roles by 1918 had to provide for an army of 2,000,000! An incredible achievement.

The position of **CIGS** was initially filled by General Charles Douglas (2 months only) and from then until October 1914 by General '**Wully**' **Robertson** ( a Haig supporter) followed in Jan 1918 by **General Henry Wilson** (who was described as 'no lover of Haig').

The Military head of the British Royal Navy was (and is) titled '**first sea lord**' (**1SL**) who was responsible to the **First Lord of the Admiralty**. The Royal Navy's 1SL was likewise domiciled in Whitehall where he could communicate readily with the Navy Minister in Cabinet.

However, to avoid muddying the waters unnecessarily the bios will be kept to the army.

### **Key Personalities in the British Army**

**Henry Wilson**- When war was declared on 4<sup>th</sup> August 1914 **General Henry Wilson** was Britain's *director of military operations*, under CIGS and responsible for 'operational planning' (ie what the British army would do in the event of war).

Because Wilson (a declared Francophile) had liaised with the French army command since 1910, he knew the details of their Plan XVII, and their secret intention for the deployment of the BEF in France on the 'left wing' of the French Army.

He also had knowledge of the complex plans for railway, shipping and movement orders for the BEF following British mobilization.

In the first War Council meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> August 1914, Wilson's advice was instrumental in the cabinet's 'wishy-washy' decision to send the BEF to France, "*in a strength to be decided, to a place to be determined, and to operate along lines as yet unspecified*".

*In 1918 Wilson was promoted to the top position in the British Army as Chief of the Imperial General Staff (CIGS)*

### **(Such indecision, after so many years of supposed planning!)**

**Sir John French** was the initial Commander in Chief of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) in France and Belgium – He had to deal with the completely unexpected attack from an overwhelming German army at **Mons** and subsequently coordinated the southward retreat from that town and the BEF's limited involvement in the Battle of the Marne in September 1914.

Some military historians suggest that French was a *cautious* commander, which may well have been a very reasonable approach in the circumstances.

However some senior military leaders at the time regarded his caution as ‘timidity’ and plotted for his replacement by Douglas Haig, which eventuated in December 1915, with the support of the King. (Haig’s wife was one of the Queen’s hand maidens and a confidante.)

**Sir Douglas Haig** took over from John French in late **December 1915** and was the Commander in Chief of British forces in Belgium & France from Dec 1915 through to the end of the war.

Philosophically Haig was a ‘*cavalryman*’, a ‘*thruster*’ and a ‘*Westerner*’, intellectually and obstinately convinced that the cavalry would play a key role in winning the War. These philosophies would have enormous consequences for the millions of men under his command on the Western Front.

While there were numerous key personalities in the Great War, perhaps none was so loved so much and hated so much as British Field Marshall Sir Douglas Haig.

The accomplishments of Douglas Haig as the commander of British forces in France and Belgium from the beginning of 1916 through to the armistice of 11<sup>th</sup> November 1918 has been rigorously disputed both by his supporters and detractors, some who were contemporaries of the time while others have made judgements as subsequent military historians.

On the affirmative side of the debate, Haig was publicly lauded as the leader of a victorious army in 1918, and in the colloquial vernacular ‘winners are grinners’ who write the subsequent history. The American general John Pershing went so far to remark that Haig was ‘the man who won the war’ – however his view needs to be tempered with the fact that his involvement with the Field Marshall only began in 1918, devoid of the experiences of Haig’s offensives on the Somme and Passchendaele.

Haig’s biographer Sir John Davidson praised his leadership, and a number of more recent ‘revisionist’ historians claim because he **allowed** the adoption of new tactics and technologies by forces under his command, this enabled the British forces to spearhead the Allies ‘**100 hundred days**’ victory of 1918.

They proceed to argue that the high casualties suffered by Haig’s British and dominion armies were a consequence of the contemporary tactical and strategic realities of the time.

On the negative side, the view is often expressed that Haig was responsible for issuing orders which led to excessive casualties of British (including significant numbers of Australian, New Zealand and Canadian) troops under his command on the Western Front. This earned him the nickname “Butcher of the Somme” for the two million British casualties under his command, and many regard him as representing the very essence of the class-based incompetent commanders of the then British Army, with an inability to grasp contemporary tactics and technologies.

With the benefit of hindsight it could be tempting to measure Douglas Haig's 1914-1918 performance against yardsticks that are available to us today.

While it was in no way his fault, Douglas Haig was part of a British military tradition and culture that was opposed to university education, learning and qualifications in fields such as science and education. In that trait he was most certainly no different to his elite German (Prussian) equivalents.

However it might be argued that his lack of a broader perspective potentially provided by a higher education was likely to have caused Haig to initially adopt negative attitudes to new ideas and technologies that evolved during the war. As a consequence he was therefore slow in changing his pre-war views to adopt and promote more effective battlefield tactics.

In the battles of 1914 in France and Belgium the commanders of both the Allied and the German armies had adopted the contemporary traditional infantry doctrine whereby they considered the numbers of soldiers they could deploy at the point of contact with the enemy would be the telling factor in bringing about a successful result.

By using this tactic of marching massed troop concentrations to march towards lines of rapid fire machine guns and modern artillery, both sides suffered enormous casualty rates in the early months of the War.

However, the German High Command was quickly cognizant of the fact their situation was one where their manpower pool for potential recruits were limited. As a consequence in early 1915 the German military had moved to develop their processes to make '**firepower**' the key determinant for success rather than '**manpower**'.

Following Haig's Somme (1916) and Passchendaele (1917) Campaigns, by early 1918 the British PM Lloyd George, Cabinet & CIGS were unhappy with Haig's strategy of 'Attrition', *but were unsure with whom to replace him.*

**Historic Heroes who influenced British decision makers in the War.**

**The Duke of Wellington (Defeated Napoleon at Waterloo)**

**Horatio Nelson (Defeated the French in the naval battle at Trafalgar)**

## The French Political Structure Before and During the Great War

The government of the French 3<sup>rd</sup> Republic was determined by the French Constitution whereby the nation declared itself to be an indivisible, secular, democratic and social **Republic with a Presidential Head of State**.

As with the Westminster system, the French constitution required a separation of powers between the legislative, executive and judicial functions of government. In Paris the **President** shared executive powers with his appointed **Prime Minister**.

Parliament comprised the lower house National Assembly made up of elected **depute's** and the Senate. It passed statutes and voted on the budget and controlled the actions of the executive through formal questioning on the floor of the houses of Parliament and by establishing commissions of inquiry.

As with the British system of government the **military leaders of the French army and navy in 1914** were (and are) subject to the authority and control of the French Parliament's Council of Ministers (our Cabinet equivalent) via the French War Minister.

**France's wartime Presidents: Raymond Poincare**

**France's wartime Prime Ministers –**

Rene' Viviani > Aristide Briand > Alexandre Ribot > Paul Painleve > Georges Clemenceau (an avid anti-catholic).

**France's wartime War Ministers > Adolphe Messimy > Alexandre Millerand**

### **The French Military**

Before and during the Great War the **ten** French armies (**I > X**) were controlled and administered by the **Grand Quartier General (GQG)** (French General Staff headquarters)

Within the GQG, the most senior French army post was that of **Commander in Chief** (who 'notionally' was responsible to the War Minister).

Despite the theoretical subordination of the GQG to the French Parliament, the French Army Commander in Chief had absolute control of all matters within the **Zone of the Armies**, including the right to execute individuals and soldiers summarily, and with respect to nature and quality of the information it provided to the War Minister and the Council of Ministers.

The French Army (and the German) would have had similar types of staff arrangements as outlined for the British (above).

## French Commanders-in-chief During the War

### Joseph Joffre > Robert Nivelle > Philippe Pe'tain

**Joseph Joffre** (1852 > 1931) was the French **Commander-in-Chief** of French armies on the Western Front from the start of World War I through until the end of **1916**.

As a key figure in the development of **Plan XVII**, Joffre was a keen enthusiast of '**offense a' outrance**' (*for his infantry to attack vigorously with the bayonet*).

(Joffre would later oppose **General Petai'n** because he considered the latter lacked "**the proper offensive spirit**" for refusing to order infantry attacks against entrenched machine guns with rifles & bayonets.)

When the War broke out, as CIC Joffre was then responsible for the implementation of **Plan XVII**. In the August – September 1914 **Battles of the Frontiers**, his French armies crossed into German territory only to subsequently suffer catastrophic losses in the face of the more technologically advanced German artillery.

So focussed was he on implementing Plan XVII, that Joffre blindsided himself as to the magnitude and significance of the German army's sweep through Belgium and into northern France. As a consequence he was slow in re-deploying his armies to meet and combat the threat that came from this unexpected direction.

In the mobile battles of 1914 Joffe is best remembered for regrouping the retreating allied armies (using the taxi cabs of Paris to move his troops) to engage the Germans at the strategically important **First Battle of the Marne** in September 1914.

After launching an number of unsuccessful offensives in 1915, followed by the German attack on Verdun in early 1916, and the disappointing results of the Anglo-French offensive on the Somme in the second half of 1916, Joffe's political star waned, and at the end of that year he was *promoted* (out of the field) to **Marshal of France**, and moved to an advisory role, from which he subsequently resigned.

**Robert Nivelle** (1856 > 1924) was an 'artillery' specialist and a very capable commander and organizer of field artillery *at the regimental and divisional levels*.

In May 1916, he succeeded **Philippe Pétain** as commander of the French Second Army in the **Battle of Verdun**, leading counter-offensives that '**claimed**' to have rolled back the German forces in late 1916, at a high cost in French lives.

As a consequence of his 'supposed' victories at Verdun, the fluent English speaking Nivelle persuaded both French and British political leaders of his military prowess, and being viewed as the potential Allies savior, was promoted to take over the role of Commander-in-chief from Joffre.

Nivelle claimed to have conceived a military offensive strategy employing field guns in support of attacking infantry that would break through the German lines and allow a subsequent Allied breakthrough.

Thus it was that he was responsible for the **Nivelle Offensive** in early 1917 at the **Chemin des Dames**. However Nivelle's planned breakthrough proved to be merely another illusion that failed badly, again with the loss of enormous French infantry casualties.

**This defeat was followed by perhaps one of the most significant but least known about or discussed events of the Great War.**

French infantry soldiers in nearly half the (ten) French armies gave notice that they were no longer be prepared to undertake futile attacks with rifles and bayonets across open ground against heavily entrenched machine guns and artillery.

They were prepared however to maintain defensive positions against any further German attacks on French territory.

This officially constituted a 'mutiny' and as a consequence the French launched no further major offensives for some months while the soldiers' issues were dealt with.

In the process, in May 1917 Nivelle was replaced as Commander in Chief by General Philippe Pe'tain.

**Philippe Pe'tain** (1856 > 1951). Pétain, already considered a 'soldiers' soldier' with a history of opposing '**offense a' outrance**' - Joffe had opposed **Petai'n** because he considered the latter lacked "**the proper offensive spirit**" for refusing to order futile infantry attacks against entrenched machine guns.

Pe'tain immediately set about restoring confidence and morale by talking to the men, promising no more suicidal attacks, providing rest for exhausted units, more frequent home furloughs, better food and more moderate discipline. He held 3400 courts martial; 554 mutineers were sentenced to death but over 90% had their sentences commuted and about 50 were executed.

Pétain conducted some successful but limited offensives in the latter part of 1917, using more sophisticated and less wasteful infantry tactics, unlike the British who stalled in an unsuccessful and futile offensive at Passchendaele that autumn.

Pétain, instead, held off from conducting major French offensives until the Americans arrived in force on the front lines, which did not happen until the early summer of 1918. He was also waiting for the new Renault FT tanks to be introduced in large numbers, hence his statement at the time: "*I am waiting for the tanks and the Americans.*"

Numerous British lives might have been saved IF Haig had done the same.

While Pe'tain served with distinction in the Great War, his reputation would be trashed when he later as Chief of State in Vichy France from 1940 to 1944.

## **Ferdinand Foch** (1851 > 1929)

Foch, along with Joffre, strongly endorsed '**offense a' outrance**' as an infantry tactic and consequently was described as an aggressive, even reckless commander at the First Marne, Flanders, and Artois campaigns of 1914-1916.

At the outbreak of war in August 1914, Foch's XX Corps participated in the brief invasion of Germany in the Battles of the Frontiers before retiring in the face of a German counter-attack and then successfully blocking the Germans short of Nancy.

Ordered west to defend Paris, Foch's prestige soared as a result of the turning of the German army at the Marne, for which he was widely credited as a chief protagonist while commanding the French Ninth Army.

As a consequence he was promoted to Assistant Commander-in-Chief for the Northern Zone, a role which evolved into command of Army Group North, where he was required to operate alongside and cooperate with the British forces for the Somme offensive.

At the end of 1916, partly owing to the disappointing results of that offensive and partly owing to internal political rivalries, Foch was transferred to Italy.

His career was resurrected again when on 26<sup>th</sup> March he was appointed "Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Armies" He played a decisive role in halting a renewed German advance on Paris in the Second Battle of the Marne, after which he was promoted to Marshal of France.

Addington says, "to a large extent the final Allied strategy which won the war on land in Western Europe in 1918 was Foch's alone."

On 11 November 1918 Foch accepted the German request for an armistice. Foch advocated peace terms that would make Germany unable to pose a threat to France ever again. Foch considered the Treaty of Versailles too lenient on Germany and as the Treaty was being signed on 28 June 1919, he declared: "This is not a peace. It is an armistice for twenty years". His words proved prophetic: the Second World War started twenty years and 64 days later.

## **The German Political Structure Before and During the Great War**

Germany in 1914 was not a democracy, though it had some of the features of one—the Reichstag, political parties, a constitution and fairly widespread voting, if only for men.

However, Kaiser Wilhelm II, with the powers of an absolute monarch, chose the government. In 1889 the Kaiser and the German army had succeeded in excluding both the parliament and its (civilian) War Ministry from any involvement in military policy making. Henceforth, war planning was the sole domain of the Great General Staff, of which Wilhelm was the Commander in Chief.

Effectively this meant that the German army was a power unto itself, with no need to either advise the parliament of its intended actions or to seek their approval to proceed.

It also meant that German 'strategic' planning would be conducted from a purely military perspective without the insights or balance available via civilian input. In the end it was the lack of this 'common sense' factor that quite possibly lost them the War, and led to the punitive outcomes that would result from the Versailles Treaty.

Wilhelm II (1851 – 1941) (German Kaiser - Grandson of Queen Victoria and first cousin to George V and Czar Nicholas) - The Kaiser was **Commander in Chief of the Imperial German Army – (Kaiserreichsheer)** and head of the Great Headquarters (*Grosses Hauptquartier*) – While he took a ore-war 'gung ho' approach to the prospect of a war, his influence in military strategy and decision making would wain as successive German 'strategies' failed as the war progressed.

In late October 1918 Wilhelm was forced to abdicate the thrown and was exiled to live out the remainder of his life in Holland.

### **Theobold Von Bethmann Hollweg – German Chancellor in the Reichstag**

In the lead up to the War Germany was socially unsettled. The 1912 Reichstag elections had resulted in the election of some 110 socialist deputies, making Reichstag Chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg's task in liaising between the parliament and the autocratic Wilhelm II, not to mention the rigidly right-wing military high command, next to impossible.

**General Helmuth Johann Von Moltke - (Referred to as Moltke the Younger) > Oberste Heeresleitung (OHL) - Supreme Army Command**

**Helmuth von Moltke**, (born May 25, 1848, Gersdorff, Mecklenburg [Germany]—died June 18, 1916, Berlin), chief of the German General Staff at the outbreak of World War I. His modification of the German attack plan in the west and his inability to retain control of his rapidly advancing armies significantly contributed to the halt of the German offensive on the Marne in September 1914 and the frustration of German efforts for a rapid, decisive victory.

Moltke rose rapidly in the German army, becoming adjutant in 1882 to his uncle and namesake, who was chief of the General Staff. The personal favour of the emperors William I and William II, coupled with his great name, elevated him to offices for which he was completely unqualified.

In 1903 Moltke became quartermaster general; three years later he succeeded Alfred von Schlieffen as chief of the General Staff. He thus inherited Schlieffen's plan for a war on two fronts, which envisaged only light German forces facing Russia on the east until France on the west had been defeated. In the Schlieffen plan of campaign against France, the German left (southern) wing would hold Alsace-Lorraine defensively while an overwhelmingly strong right (northern) wing would advance rapidly through Belgium and northern France, outflanking and eventually helping encircle the French armies while also capturing Paris.

As chief of staff Moltke's principal duty was to revise the Schlieffen plan to meet modern conditions. But his task was a difficult one, and when war broke out in August 1914 Moltke did not measure up to its requirements. He allowed several army commanders on the German left wing to attack into France instead of remaining on the defensive. Moreover, he reinforced these attacks with divisions taken from the crucial right wing and then sent several more divisions to the Eastern Front to check the Russian advance into East Prussia. The German high command lost touch with the advancing armies of the right wing, and the movements of that wing's constituent units became disjointed. These and other factors culminated not only in the right wing failing to encircle the French left but becoming itself the victim of a French and British flank attack that halted the entire German offensive at the Battle of the Marne (Sept. 6–12, 1914). Moltke's mood became more and more despairing during this time, and he finally abdicated responsibility completely. On Sept. 14, 1914, Emperor William II replaced Moltke as chief of staff, though he retained nominal command until the end of the year. A speedy victory in the

west had eluded Germany's grasp, and within a few months of the Battle of the Marne the Western Front had settled down to the murderous and static trench warfare that was to persist unabated for almost three years. Moltke died a broken man less than two years later.

**Falkenhayn, General Eric Von - German War Minister**

**Hindenburg, General Paul Von -**

**Ludendorff, General Eric**

**Historic figures who influenced German decision makers prior to and during the War.**

**Bismarck, Otto Von – Prussian General who orchestrated the unification of German States to create the German nation.**

**Moltke, Helmuth Von - (Architect of the Prussian victories over Austria in 1866 and France in 1870) (Referred to as Moltke the Elder)**

**Schlieffen Eric Von - Author of the German war strategy (The Schlieffen Plan) employed to invade France via Belgium**