

# BRUSILOV OFFENSIVE



The Russian Army had suffered a series of crushing defeats in the first year of the war, but the Brusilov Offensive (*4 June - 20 September 1916*) would be the most successful Russian offensive – and one of the most successful breakthrough operations – of the First World War.

Germany was forced to redirect troops to the Eastern Front in support of its ally. The Russians were never able to duplicate Brusilov's success. It was their last major offensive of the war and led to an overall weakening – both militarily and politically – of both Russia and Austria-Hungary. The war stoked political and social unrest, leading to revolution and eventually the total collapse of the Russian Army.

# GALLIPOLI CAMPAIGN



The Gallipoli campaign (25 April 1915 - 9 January 1916) was the land-based element of a strategy intended to capture Constantinople and ultimately knock Ottoman Turkey out of the war. But Allied plans were based on the mistaken belief that the Ottomans could be easily overcome.

At dawn on 25 April 1915, Allied troops landed on the Gallipoli peninsula in Ottoman Turkey. General Sir Ian Hamilton decided to make two landings, separating British Troops from the Australian and New Zealand ones. Both landings were quickly contained by determined Ottoman troops and the Allies were unable to advance.

Trench warfare quickly took hold, mirroring the fighting of the Western Front. Casualties mounted heavily and in the summer heat conditions rapidly deteriorated. Sickness was rampant, food quickly became inedible and there were vast swarms of black corpse flies. Gallipoli became a defining moment in the history of both Australia and New Zealand, revealing characteristics that both countries have used to define their soldiers: endurance, determination, initiative and 'mateship'.

# **BATTLE OF JUTLAND**



The Battle of Jutland (31 May - 1 June 1916) was the largest naval battle of the First World War. It was the only time that the British and German fleets of 'dreadnought' battleships actually came to blows.

The German High Seas Fleet hoped to weaken the Royal Navy by launching an ambush on the British Grand Fleet in the North Sea. German Admiral Reinhard Scheer planned to lure out both Admiral Sir David Beatty's Battlecruiser Force and Admiral Sir John Jellicoe's Grand Fleet. Scheer hoped to destroy Beatty's force before Jellicoe's arrived, but the British were warned by their codebreakers and put both forces to sea early.

Jutland was a confused and bloody action involving 250 ships and around 100,000 men. The British lost 14 ships and over 6,000 men, but were ready for action again the next day. The Germans, who had lost 11 ships and over 2,500 men, avoided complete destruction but never again seriously challenged British control of the North Sea.



# BATTLE OF MEGIDDO



The Battle of Megiddo (19-25 September 1918) marked the beginning of the final British-led offensive in the Sinai and Palestine Campaign. It successfully combined cavalry, infantry, artillery, armoured vehicles and aircraft to achieve decisive victory over the Ottoman Turks and their German allies. It was the start of a series of important Allied victories that ultimately led to the collapse of Ottoman Turkish forces and their eventual withdrawal from the war.

A successful Allied deception campaign had convinced Ottoman forces that an Allied attack would come further east, leaving Ottoman defenseless and outnumbered. In the weeks that followed, the Allies captured other strategically important cities. On 30 October, the Ottoman Empire sought a peace settlement with the Allies and an armistice was signed at Mudros, with hostilities ceasing at 12 noon the following day. This was also after Turkish forces were defeated by Britain and its allies in Mesopotamia.



# BATTLE OF THE SOMME



The Battle of the Somme (1 July - 18 November 1916) was a joint operation between British and French forces intended to achieve a decisive victory over the Germans on the Western Front. For many in Britain, the resulting battle remains the most painful and infamous episode of the First World War.

They were faced with German defenses that had been carefully laid out over many months. Despite a seven-day bombardment prior to the attack on 1 July, the British did not achieve the quick breakthrough their military leadership had planned for and the Somme became a deadlocked battle of attrition. Over the next 141 days, the British advanced a maximum of seven miles. More than one million men from all sides were killed, wounded or captured. British casualties on the first day – numbering over 57,000, of which 19,240 were killed – make it the bloodiest day in British military history.

The Somme has a prominent place in British history and popular memory and has come to represent the loss and apparent futility of the war. However, commanders learned difficult but important lessons on the Somme that would contribute to eventual Allied victory in 1918.

# **BATTLE OF VERDUN**



The Battle of Verdun (21 February - 18 December 1916) was the longest battle of the First World War. It was also one of the costliest. It began in February 1916 with a German attack on the fortified French town of Verdun, where bitter fighting would continue for most of the year. The ten-hour opening bombardment saw an unprecedented concentration of firepower and although the French were forced back they did not break.

The French retook lost ground in the autumn and through careful management of their army, efficient logistics and the resilience of the troops fighting for their homeland, the French secured a defensive victory before the year's end.

The Germans had lost over 430,000 men killed or wounded and the French approximately 550,000. The trauma of this loss not only affected French political and military decision-making during and after the war, it had a lasting effect on French national identity and pride.



# THIRD YPRES CAMPAIGN



The area surrounding the Belgian town of Ypres was a key battleground throughout the war. By 1917 British forces were suffering steady casualties there, holding a salient surrounded by higher ground. Sir Douglas Haig planned to break out of this poor position and, by capturing an important rail junction a few miles to the east, to undermine the whole German position in Flanders. If this succeeded he hoped to threaten the German submarine base at Bruges as the German U-boat campaign was threatening Britain with defeat.

Initial attacks failed due to over-ambitious plans and unseasonal rain. The drainage of the low-lying battlefield had been destroyed by the bombardment, creating muddy conditions that made movement difficult. Although the Canadians finally captured Passchendaele ridge on 10 November, the vital railway still lay five miles away. The offensive was called off. Many soldiers felt utterly demoralized and the government's confidence in Haig hit a low point. Both sides had suffered heavy casualties, but the British Forces had made no strategic gain.

# GERMAN SPRING OFFENSIVES



The German Spring Offensives (21 March - 18 July 1918) represented a calculated gamble for Germany in trying to tip the balance on the Western Front once and for all. The German Army achieved unprecedented gains measured in miles rather than yards. Germany had, after all, concentrated all of its resources on the Western Front after the defeat of Russia. Facing them were weary Allied forces that for three years had largely been on the offensive, had not fully organized their defenses in depth and were beginning to suffer manpower shortages.

In the face of the onslaught the Allied line bent but did not break. The fighting became uncharacteristically open as pockets of defenders attempted to slow the German advance. Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig issued a special order of the day using the phrase 'Backs to the Wall' to sum up the desperate but determined fighting in progress. While the German offensives were tactical successes, they were strategic failures. The advances had no decisive goal other than to punch a hole in the Allied line and primarily target the British. The largest gains took place where the Allies were most willing to give ground. German casualties were high, particularly amongst the best units. The tide began to turn and by early summer the German offensives ground to a halt.



# CHRISTMAS TRUCE OF 1914

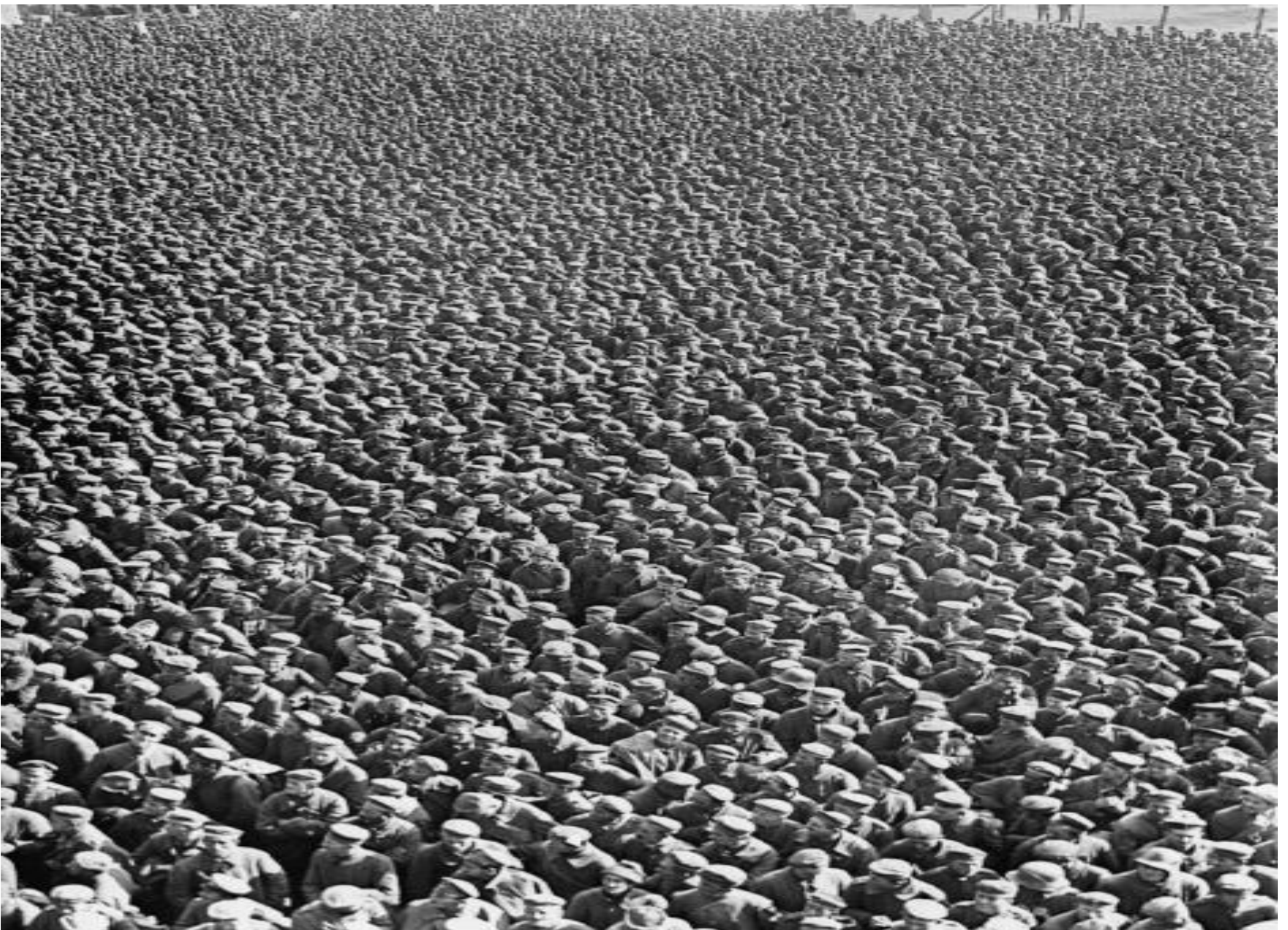


The Christmas Truce refers to a series of widespread but unofficial ceasefires along the Western Front of World War I around Christmas 1914. In the week leading up to the 25th, French, German, and British soldiers crossed trenches to exchange seasonal greetings and talk. In some areas, men from both sides ventured into no man's land on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day to mingle and exchange food and souvenirs. There were joint burial ceremonies and prisoner swaps, while several meetings ended in carol-singing. Men played games of football (soccer) with one another, giving one of the most memorable images of the truce.

The truces reflected a growing mood of "live and let live", where infantry close together would stop overtly aggressive behavior and often engage in small-scale friendship, engaging in conversation or bartering for cigarettes. In some sectors, there would be occasional ceasefires to allow soldiers to go between the lines and recover wounded or dead comrades, while in others, there would be a tacit agreement not to shoot while men rested, exercised or worked in full view of the enemy. The Christmas truces were particularly significant due to the number of men involved and the level of their participation—and are often seen as a symbolic moment of peace and humanity amidst one of the most violent events of human history.



# BATTLE OF AMIENS



The Battle of Amiens (8-11 August 1918) heralded the start of the Hundred Days campaign, a four-month period of Allied success. After surviving the German Spring Offensives, Allied forces launched a counter-punch of their own and from the summer of 1918 onwards, they were constantly on the advance.

Through the harsh experiences of the past the Allies had developed advanced operational methods that best used the materiel power at their disposal. The British Forces were at the forefront, combining scientific artillery methods and flexible infantry firepower with the use of tanks and aircraft. These combined arms methods were to form a blueprint for the future.

The Battle of Amiens opened on 8 August. Secretive preparations ensured surprise and the Allies made gains of seven miles on that one day – German General Erich Ludendorff described it as the 'black day' of the German Army. But unlike offensives of the past, the Allies now knew when to stop. After four days of fighting at Amiens the battle was halted as its effects diminished, with a fresh offensive launched elsewhere. This set the pattern for success. A series of coordinated hammer blows forced increasingly exhausted German forces back.



# DOUGHBOYS



A Doughboy was an informal term for a member of the United States Army or Marine Corps, especially used to refer to members of the American Expeditionary Forces in World War I. The origins of the term are unclear, however, though a number of theories have been put forward to explain this usage:

- Cavalrymen used the term to deride foot soldiers, because the brass buttons on their uniforms looked like the flour dumplings or dough cakes called "doughboys", or because of the flour or pipe clay which the soldiers used to polish their white belts.
- Observers noticed U.S. infantry forces were constantly covered with chalky dust from marching through the dry terrain of northern Mexico, giving the men the appearance of unbaked dough or the mud bricks of the area known as adobe.
- The soldiers' method of cooking field rations of the 1840s and 1850s into doughy flour-and-rice concoctions baked in the ashes of a camp fire.
- One joke explanation for the term's origin was that in World War I, the doughboys were "kneaded" in 1914 but didn't rise until 1917.



# VICTORY GARDENS



Victory gardens, also called war gardens or food gardens for defense, were vegetable, fruit, and herb gardens planted at private residences and public parks in the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and Germany during World War I and World War II. George Washington Carver wrote an agricultural tract and promoted the idea of what he called a "Victory Garden".

They were used along with Rationing Stamps and Cards to reduce pressure on the public food supply. Besides indirectly aiding the war effort, these gardens were also considered a civil "morale booster" in that gardeners could feel empowered by their contribution of labor and rewarded by the produce grown. This made victory gardens a part of daily life on the home front.





# COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC INFORMATION



The Committee on Public Information, also known as the Creel Committee, was an independent agency of the government of the United States created to influence public opinion to support US participation in World War I.

Headed by George Creel, the purpose of the CPI was to influence American public opinion toward supporting U.S. participation in World War I via a prolonged propaganda campaign. They at first used material that was based on fact, but spun it to present an upbeat picture of the American war effort. The committee used newsprint, posters, radio, telegraph, cable and movies to broadcast its message.

The CPI also recruited about 75,000 "Four Minute Men," (volunteers who spoke about the war at social events for an ideal length of four minutes. They covered the draft, rationing, war bond drives, victory gardens and why America was fighting. It was estimated that by the end of the war, they had made more than 7.5 million speeches to 314 million people in 5,200 communities.

# “UNCLE SAM”



Uncle Sam (initials U.S.) is a common national personification of the American government or the United States in general.

While his origins trace to the War of 1812, Uncle Sam did not get a standard appearance, until the well-known "recruitment" image above was first created by James Montgomery Flagg during World War I. The image was inspired by a British recruitment poster showing Lord Kitchener in a similar pose. It is this image more than any other that has influenced the modern appearance of Uncle Sam: an elderly white man with white hair and a goatee, wearing a white top hat with white stars on a blue band, a blue tail coat, and red-and-white-striped trousers.



# **“NO MAN’S LAND”**



“No Man's Land” during World War I was the perilous stretch of territory between opposing trenches, characterized by desolation and danger. Called that because “no man would want to go there, and no man could stay alive there,” it was a hellish landscape, littered with the remnants of battle—shell craters, twisted metal, and the haunting echoes of the fallen. This treacherous zone was riddled with land mines, making any attempt to cross it a gamble with death. Barbed wire stretched like sinister webs, designed to ensnare and slow down advancing soldiers, turning even the simplest movement into a deadly endeavor.

Sniper attacks added to the atmosphere of fear; hidden marksmen could pick off soldiers with deadly precision, forcing those brave enough to cross to remain in constant vigilance. The sights and sounds of despair—wounded men crying out for help, the stench of decay—permeated the air, creating a scene of utter horror. No Man's Land became a graveyard, marked by the countless dead and dying, a testament to the futility and brutality of war. It represented not just a physical barrier, but a profound symbol of the human cost of conflict, and became a symbol of WWI, of desolation, and of the true “hell” that war can be.



# KAISER WILHELM II



Wilhelm II, or William II, was the last German Emperor (Kaiser) and King of Prussia, ruling the German Empire and the Kingdom of Prussia from 15 June 1888 to 9 November 1918. He was the eldest grandchild of the British Queen Victoria and related to many monarchs and princes of Europe.

Acceding to the throne in 1888, he dismissed the Chancellor, Otto von Bismarck, in 1890 and launched Germany on a haphazard "New Course" in foreign affairs that culminated in his support for Austria-Hungary in the crisis of July 1914 that led in a matter of days to the First World War.

Bombastic and impetuous, he sometimes made tactless pronouncements on sensitive topics without consulting his ministers, culminating in a disastrous *Daily Telegraph* interview in 1908 that cost him most of his influence.

His leading generals, Paul von Hindenburg and Erich Ludendorff, dictated policy during the First World War with little regard for the civilian government. An ineffective war-time leader, he lost the support of the army, abdicated in November 1918, and fled to exile in the Netherlands.



# TSAR NICHOLAS II



The last Emperor (Tsar) of Russia, Nicholas Romanov had already led his country through wars with Japan and Eastern Europe in the past by the time WWI hostilities escalated. With Germany's decision to enter into the Triple Alliance system with Austria-Hungary and Italy, Russia naturally saw Germany as its main potential enemy; this despite Nicholas's position as the cousin of German Kaiser Wilhelm II. Consequently Russia entered into an alliance with Britain and France, the 'Triple Entente'. When war was declared by Germany with France in August 1914, Russia came into the war on France's side.

Dissatisfied with the army's conduct of the war, Nicholas took personal command in September 1915. The Russian army were fighting on the Eastern Front and its ongoing lack of success was causing dissension at home. Unfortunately, now operating under Nicholas II's supreme command, its continued failure reflected directly upon the Tsar himself rather than the army command. Nicholas's popularity dwindled. Nicholas II was persuaded to abdicate on 15 March 1917 under the recommendation of the Russian Army High Command. Nicholas II was persuaded to abdicate on 15 March 1917 under the recommendation of the Russian Army High Command. He initially sought asylum in Britain, but was denied, and then he and his family were moved to Siberia where they were executed on the night of July 16, 1918 (And his daughter Anastasia did *not* survive).

# **T.E. LAWRENCE**



T.E. Lawrence gained fame as a British leader of an Arab revolt against the Ottoman Empire during World War One. He was a British archaeologist, military officer, diplomat, and writer, who, as a charismatic figure, threw himself into Arabic culture to befriend and sympathize with his Arab partners. It was this ability to identify with the Arab peoples which made him a successful military leader in the guerilla warfare of the 1917 Arab revolt.

Leading several successful attacks against Ottoman interests in the region, and doing so on camel, he earned the nickname, “Lawrence of Arabia,” which also became the title of a Hollywood film about him.

Winston Churchill said of him ““I deem him one of the greatest beings alive in our time... We shall never see his like again. His name will live in history. It will live in the annals of war... It will live in the legends of Arabia.”



# SIEGE OF TSINGTAO



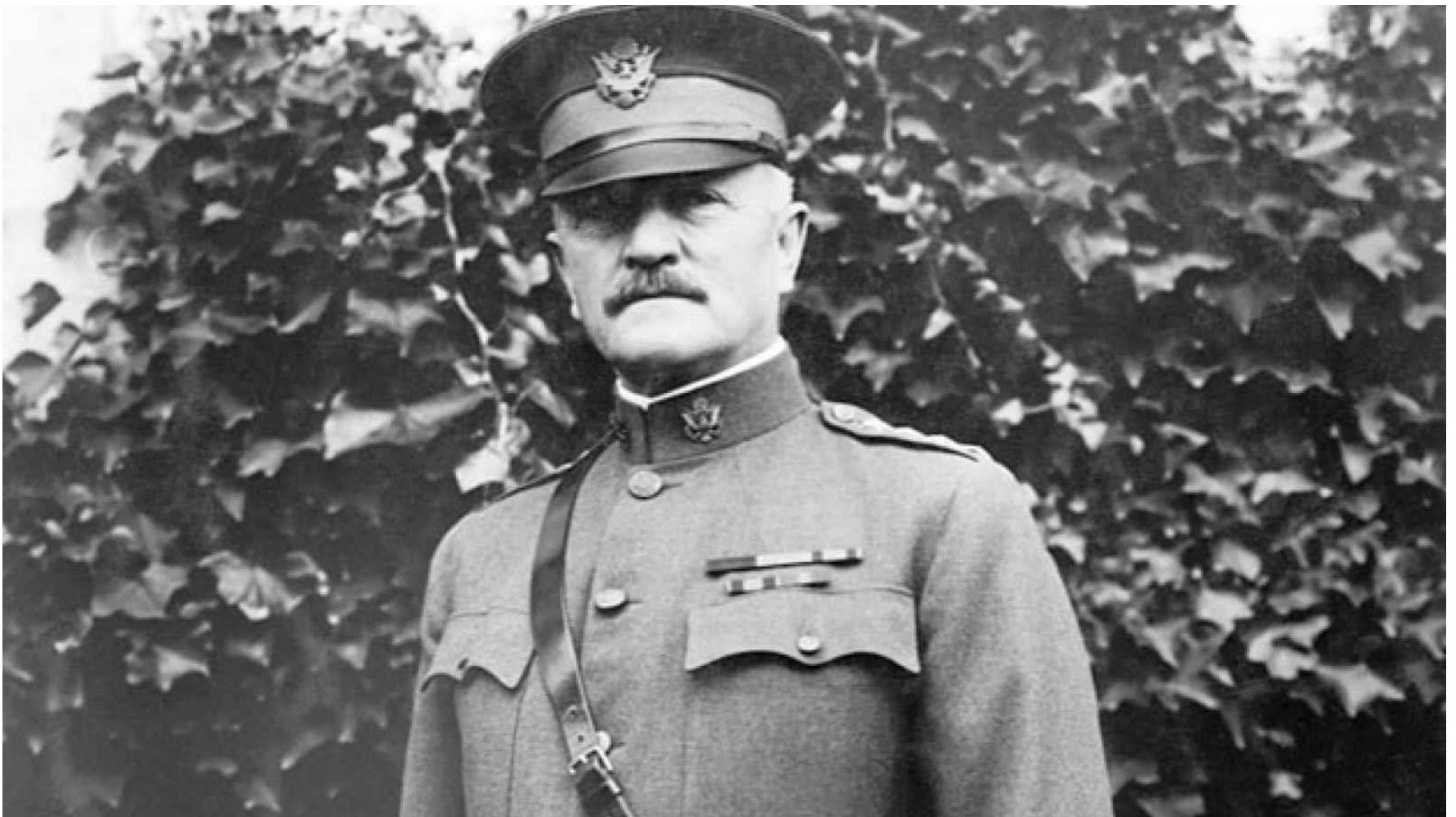
In the Far East, Britain has an ally – Japan. Fresh from victory in the Russo-Japanese war, the Japanese flex their military muscles, and made good on their own “alliances.”

In the autumn of 1914 British and Japanese forces attack the port of Tsingtao (Qingdao) – a German colony - in China. Although the Germans put up a firm resistance a force of 23,000 Japanese soldiers seizes control. Japan also takes over Germany’s colonies in the Caroline, Mariana and Marshall Islands. Later in the war, Japan sends warships to help protect Allied shipping in the Mediterranean.

The Siege of Tsingtao was not only an important individual battle and win for the Allied Powers in the Pacific, but also paved the way for later military action in the South-East Asian sphere of influence, and showed Japan that they could win against much larger and wealthier forces by way of sheer military strategy and might.



# **GEN. JOHN J. PERSHING**



General of the Armies John Joseph "Black Jack" Pershing was a senior United States Army officer. His most famous post was when he served as the commander of the American Expeditionary Force (AEF) on the Western Front in World War I, 1917–18.

General Pershing rejected British and French demands that American forces be integrated with their armies, and insisted that the AEF would operate as a single unit under his command. However, he did allow some American divisions to fight under British command, and also allowed all-black units to be integrated with the French army.

Pershing is the only American to be promoted in his own lifetime to General of the Armies rank, the highest possible rank in the United States Army (and equivalent of a six-star general).

Some of his tactics have been criticized both by other commanders at the time and by modern historians. His reliance on costly frontal assaults, long after other Allied armies had abandoned such tactics, has been blamed for causing unnecessarily high American casualties.

In addition to leading the A.E.F. to victory in World War I, Pershing notably served as a mentor to many in the generation of generals who led the United States Army during World War II, including George Marshall, Dwight D. Eisenhower, Omar Bradley, George S. Patton, and Douglas MacArthur.