

- 1915
 - Bitter argument divides Ger command
 - Falkenhayn believes victory = West
 - Hindenburg & Ludendorff = victory in East
 - Kaiser = fudged
 - Result = neither front gets sufficient troops
 - Aus = suffering from 1914 campaigns
 - Troops retreat from Battle of Galicia
 - Fall back to Przemyśl
 - Rus 1st siege = Sept
 - 2nd siege begins Nov
 - Conrad's biggest concern = consequences if Przemyśl falls
 - Rus forces
 - Situation precarious
 - Yet = optimistic
 - Recognize Aus weakness
 - BUT Ger = threat in North
 - Result = Tsar fudged as well
- Central Powers form plans in Winter 1914-1915
 - Focus = solving Rus problem in East

- Ger transfers troops from West
 - In North, Ger moves on Jan 31, 1915
 - Battle of Bolimov
 - Ger uses “secret” weapon – zylyl bromide
 - Goal = quickly break Rus troops
 - NOTE: gas freezes
 - Result = attack called off
 - Hindenburg triggers 2nd Battle of Masurian Lakes
 - 1st strikes from South
 - Then uses delay tactic – strikes from East
 - Ger pincers outflank Rus positions
 - Remnants retreat to Osowiec
 - Ger advance then stalls
- Meanwhile, Conrad's focus = survival of Przemyśl
 - During 2nd Siege – Rus unleashes artillery
 - Dec-Feb, Aus tries to break the siege
 - By-mid March, Rus pierces Aus lines

- Rus commander of 8th Army = Aleksei Brusilov
- Siege bad for both victors and losers

— Fall of Przemysl = alarming for Berlin

- More troops moved from West
- Launch joint operations from Carpathian Mts into Galicia
- Rus forced to abandon Przemysl
- Lviv (in Ukraine) captured by June 22
- Hindenburg wants to take Warsaw
- Ger advance turns into rout
- BUT, insufficient troops to knock out Rus

- In West, no division

— Brit & FR = common goals

- F.M. John French (Brit) & Gen. Joseph Joffre (FR)
- BEF divides into two armies
- But where to attack?

- Western Front = both military & geographic conundrum
 - 1st = how to break thru Ger lines?
 - 2nd = where most effective?
 - Focus = Ger RR lines
 - Plan = two simultaneous attacks
 - 1) Joint operation in Flanders
 - 2) FR attack from Champagne
 - Waited until Spring
- In 1915, both sides attacked with ferocity
 - Issue = unsustainable
 - Expected war of movement NOT static operations
 - Result = advance limited by industrial capacity – not manpower
- FR Champagne offense in Feb
 - Forward thrusts launched sporadically
 - No gains made
- Brits strike near Neuve Chapelle
 - IT = 1st “set-piece attack” of war
 - Tactic devised by Brit Gen. Douglas Haig

- Battle = significant
- MISTAKE = Haig doesn't link success to short bombardment
- Ger 1st attack near Ypres
 - 2nd Battle of Ypres = four interconnected battles
 - Purpose = give impression Ger still strong in West
 - This battle = different
 - Secret weapon = Chlorine gas
 - Delivery system devised by Fritz Haber
 - 1st use = April 22nd near village of Gravenstafel
 - Next day, Gers use near St. Julien
 - 3rd day, Canadians try countermeasures
 - Lines stall for two weeks
 - Then, Ger deploy artillery
 - Final assault near Bellewaarde
 - Ger move lines but at high cost

- Joffre turns attention to Artois
 - 2nd Battle of Artois May 9 – June 18
 - Launched during 2nd Battle of Ypres
 - FR & Brit units attack Ger position on ridges
 - Attack lasts until ammo shortages dictate halt

- Post Battle analysis = critical
 - FR analysis Brigadier General Philippe Pétain
 - Ger analysis = renewed emphasis on infantry shelters

- Stalemate of Ypres & Artois cause unease
 - Similar split as Ger
 - Joffre & Haig = “Westerners”
 - “Easterners” argued attack Ger by way of Mediterranean theatres
 - Both sides argue for rest of war

- Over summer, BEF expands steadily
 - Territorial troops; new Brit army; plus entire Canadian army
 - Fresh troops = increased Brit positions

- In September, “Westerners” got another chance
 - Simultaneous offensive in Artois (Brits) & Champagne (FR)
 - Joffre wants Brit focus on village of Loos
 - Battle of Loos = significant for three reasons
 - But, battle proved to be disastrous
 - Kitchener recalls French; promotes Haig
 - FR = 2nd Battle of Champagne
 - At first = successful
 - But run out of shells
 - Joffre abandons offensives
- By end of 1915, front nearly identical to 1914
 - Most significant consequence = creaks between Allies appear
- Winds shift slightly in 1915 = Italian entry in WWI
 - Italy was member of Triple Alliance
 - PM Antonio Salandra announces Italian neutrality
 - Reason: terms not apply
 - Truth: many factors when into decision
 - Irony: If Italy joined, victory may have come

- Salandra feared Central Power reaction
 - Ger & Aus consider neutrality = betrayal
- Both sides tried convincing Italy to enter War
 - Ger fear Aus-Hun might be overwhelmed
 - Aus rather fight Italians than buying off
 - Brit & FR attempted to bribe Italy
 - Salandra sits quiet to see how things develop
- Deal struck April 26th, 1915
 - Secret pack = Treaty of London
 - IT had to declare war on Ger & Aus within month
 - If Entente won, IT get Balkan land
 - NOTE: Serbs annoyed
- IT declares war on Aus
 - IT = most unprepared for war
 - Shares 400 mile border w/ Aus-Hun
- Only real objective = port of Trieste
 - General Luigi Cadorna = worships at alter of Offensive
 - Plan – divide army

- War starts poorly
 - Takes 50 days to mobilize
 - Cadorna = Italian version of Conrad
 - Launches four offensives at Isonzo
 - None came close to Trieste
 - By Dec 1915, only advanced 10 miles

- Italian front = insignificant