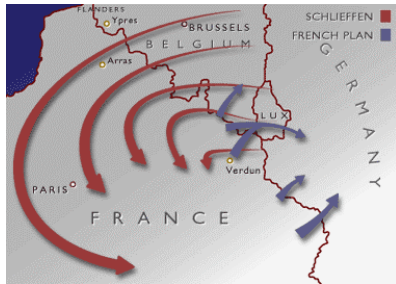


## Schlieffen Plan



## The Schlieffen Plan



- General Count Alfred von Schlieffen
- Chief of the German General Staff
- Schlieffen Plan took 9 years to create

## The Schlieffen Plan

- The operational plan for a designated attack on France
- To be carried out once Russia started to mobilize their forces along the German border
- Plan lead to Britain declaring war on Germany

## The Alliances

- Triple Alliance “Central Powers” :
  - Germany, Austria and Italy
- Triple Entente “Allies” :
  - Britain, France and Russia

## The Schlieffen Plan - France

- Believed that the best place to have war in Europe was on the western sector
- Germany identified France as it's biggest threat
- Russia was not as advance as France in many areas (arms, military, etc)

## The Schlieffen Plan - Russia



- Schlieffen believed that Russia would take six weeks to mobilise her forces
- Any possible fighting on the Russian-German border could be coped with by the Germans for a few weeks
- The bulk of her forces concentrated on defeating France

## The Schlieffen Plan - Surprise Attack

- The Plan: a massive and successful surprise attack against France
- Schlieffen hoped it would be enough to put off Britain becoming involved in a continental war
- Timeline: Schlieffen had built six weeks into his plan for this attack to be successfully completed
- This would allow Germany time to transfer soldiers (who had been fighting in the successful French campaign) to Russia to take on the Russians

## The Schlieffen Plan - Belgium



- Planned for the attack on France to go through Belgium and Luxembourg
- What is the problem with this plan? What might be the effect?

## The Schlieffen Plan - Belgium

- Belgium had had her neutrality guaranteed by Britain in 1839
- Strategy for success depended on Britain not supporting Belgium

## The Schlieffen Plan - Invasion

- Schlieffen wanted to send troops down towards Paris
- Cut off the supplies of the French Army
- Died before his plan was carried out

## The Schlieffen Plan – Revised 1906

- a devastating attack on France via Belgium as soon as Russia had announced her intention to mobilize
- a holding operation on the Russian/German border to be carried out if necessary and if required
- a 6 week goal to defeat France
- Germany would then use her modernized rail system to move troops from the French operation to the Russian front
- Russia would then be attacked and defeated

**What weaknesses do you see in Schlieffen's plan?**

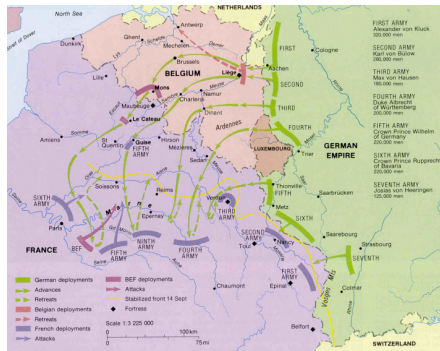
## The Schlieffen Plan - Weaknesses

- The actions of Russia determined when Germany would have to start her attack on France even if she was ready or not
- It assumed that Russia would need six weeks to mobilize (it took only 10 days)
- It assumed that Germany would defeat France in less than six weeks

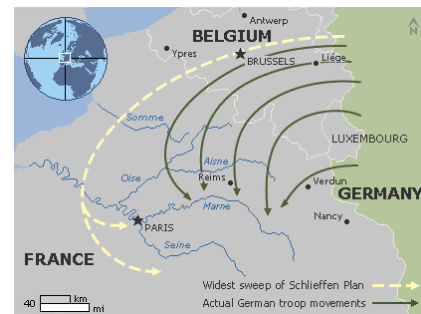
## The Schlieffen Plan - Failed

- Troops did not advance far enough to cut off supplies in Paris
- Withdrawal of German troops (in response to a higher than expected threat on the Russian front) meant that the Germans did not have enough military resources that Schlieffen had built into his original plan

## German Invasion on France



## Change From Original Plan



## The Schlieffen Plan - Failed

- Schlieffen's speedy attack and expected defeat of France never occurred - it's failure did usher in the era of [trench warfare](#)