



# ON THE BRINK



# ACROSS THE HAWTHORN HEDGE

1914  
1915



Across the hawthorn hedge the noise of bugles, flares across the night, Somewhere on the lough was a prison ship for Germans, a cage across their sight.



FROM ILLUSTRATIONS BY LUKE BAINBRIDGE  
FROM REPRODUCTIONS BY GUY LAWRENCE, ILLUSTRATION

## EUROPE AND IRELAND IN 1914

In 1914, European imperial powers, harbouring old rivalries and constantly competing for territory and influence, were on the brink of conflict. Ireland, divided by the Home Rule issue, was on the brink of civil war.

### A CLASH OF EMPIRES

Europe in 1914 was dominated by imperial powers formed into two major power blocs. The Triple Alliance, an alliance of the United Kingdom, France and Russia, was opposed by the Triple Alliance (consisting of Austria-Hungary, Germany and Italy).

Germany had emerged from a collection of independent states to become one of the world's most industrialised nations, eager to expand its territory and influence.

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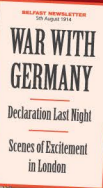
Legend: The Triple Alliance (orange), The Triple Alliance (yellow)



### THE COUNTDOWN TO WAR

On 28th June 1914, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary, was assassinated in Sarajevo, Bosnia. This led to the outbreak of World War I. In August 1914, Britain declared war on Germany, through neutral Belgium.

Britain declared war on Germany on 4th August 1914, under the terms of an old treaty with Belgium.



### DIVIDED LOYALTIES IRELAND IN 1914

The Home Rule issue had polarised Ireland. The Irish Unionists, led by Edward Carson, supported the British Government and the Irish Nationalists, led by John Redmond, supported it. By 1914, the two sides had formed opposing militias. The Irish Volunteers, led by John Redmond, and the Ulster Volunteers, commanded by Sir George Robinson, both sides were armed with guns from Germany and Austria.

Ulster, like the rest of Ulster, was divided in the question of Home Rule. The Irish Nationalists supported it, while the Ulster Unionists opposed it. The Ulster Volunteers, led by John Redmond, and the Ulster Volunteers, commanded by Sir George Robinson, both sides were armed with guns from Germany and Austria.



### THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT



Abigail Adams, Boston, Massachusetts, with her husband John Adams, 1776. Adams was the first woman to sign the Declaration of Independence.

1914 was a year of great military by Ulster suffragettes with a campaign of violence, arson and bombing. However, for many women, the issue was not just about the vote but also about the right to work.

Although Redmond and Carson held opposing positions on Home Rule, they had much in common. Both had conservative convictions, supported the British Empire and opposed women's suffrage.

### THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

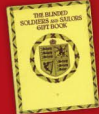
In 1914, Irish trade unionism was taking shape. After a period of military activity, it had settled since 1907. Many active trade unionists had moved to the army and were mobilised when war was declared. By the spring of 1915, two-thirds of the membership of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union were in the trenches. However, industrial output did not stop because of the war.



### CULTURE

Artists, photographers, poets and musicians noticed, serving as war correspondents, photographers and artists. These artists were increasingly sought after ways to contribute, such as civil service. For many artists, work dried up as the war continued.

Robert Rindley, London, 1914. Rindley was a suffragette and a member of the Women's Social and Political Union. He was arrested in 1913 by a group of men and was held in the cells of the Old Bailey for 14 days.



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