

WORLD WAR I NEWSPAPER FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

# FirstNews



MORE THAN A MILLION READERS

---5 August 1914---

## WE ARE AT WAR



**THESE** were the scenes in Trafalgar Square yesterday, following the declaration of war on Germany.

The Prime Minister had told Germany to get out of Belgium by midnight on 3 August. After the deadline passed, Britain had no choice but to throw her entire Empire's resources into the struggle against Germany in order to ensure victory in defence of Belgium.

Prime Minister Herbert Asquith will give a speech tomorrow in the Houses of Parliament. He will place great emphasis on the efforts of the British Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Grey, to secure continued peace in the face of German aggression.

The declaration of war was well received by the British public, as shown by our picture, with

by editor Nicky Cox

crowds cheering in Trafalgar Square yesterday. It was officially stated at the Foreign Office on 3 August that Great Britain declared war against Germany at 11 pm. The British Ambassador in Berlin has been handed his passport.

### *The King's message*

The King has addressed the following message to Admiral Sir John Jellicoe: "At this grave moment in our national history I send to you and, through you, to the officers and men

of the fleets... my confidence that under your direction they will revive and renew the old glories of the Royal Navy, and prove once again the sure shield of Britain and of her Empire in the hour of trial."

It has been reported that Germany had taken the first hostile step by destroying a British mine-layer.

Now Germany is in a state of war with Great Britain, Russia, France and Belgium. Germany tried to bribe Britain with peace to desert our friends and duty. But Great Britain has chosen the path of honour. Germany's ambition seems to be to control the destiny of the whole of Europe.

# Join up, join up! War to be “over by Christmas”

9 August 1914

THE widespread belief among political leaders and ordinary Britons alike is that this war will be a short one.

by Eddie de Oliveira

Some think that the conflict will be over by Christmas – just four months away – with a great victory for the armed forces of the Triple Entente (the UK, France and Russia) against the aggressors led by Germany.

Two days ago, the Secretary of War, Lord Kitchener, issued a plea for 100,000 new recruits aged between 19 and 30 to join the British military. His call to arms proved exceptionally popular, with early reports from across the country indicating that scores of eager men have queued at enlisting offices for hours to register their names. Several new offices are being opened to cope with the demand. At the Great Scotland Yard recruiting headquarters, mounted police were called in to hold back the enormous crowds.

The spirit among Britons is upbeat, with many of the young men in villages and towns up and down the country saying they are delighted to be part of the war effort.

Prime Minister Herbert Asquith appointed Lord Kitchener as Secretary of War in recognition of his work as Commander-in-Chief of India and his success in battle in Sudan and the Second Boer War from 1900 to 1902. His experiences in South Africa have given him the necessary expertise to lead the war effort.

Meanwhile, Parliament yesterday passed the Defence of the Realm Act, which is



A recruitment drive in Trafalgar Square, London

designed to aid the war effort. Among other things, the Act allows the Government to make sure that all factories can be used by the Navy or Army should they need them for the production of arms or equipment. The Act also prevents Britons from communicating with the enemy in any way that puts British armed forces at risk.



Crowds gather outside a recruitment office in London

## First British vessel sunk

7 August 1914

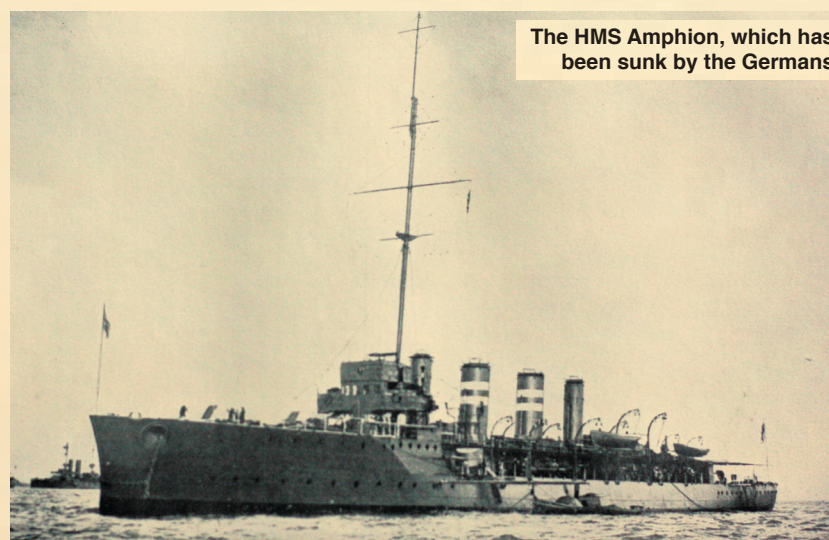
THE Secretary of the Admiralty says that HMS Amphion has become the first British ship to be sunk by the German navy in this war.

Amphion, a Royal Navy Scout cruiser, was patrolling in the North Sea when she struck a mine in the early hours of yesterday morning, killing 150 British sailors and 18 crew members from a German ship who had earlier been taken captive.

There are believed to be lots of survivors who have been seized by German sailors.

In other news, the first members of the British Expeditionary Force are expected to land in France today. Squadrons of the Royal

Flying Corps should follow shortly after, perhaps as soon as next week.



The HMS Amphion, which has been sunk by the Germans

## USA to remain neutral

20 August 1914

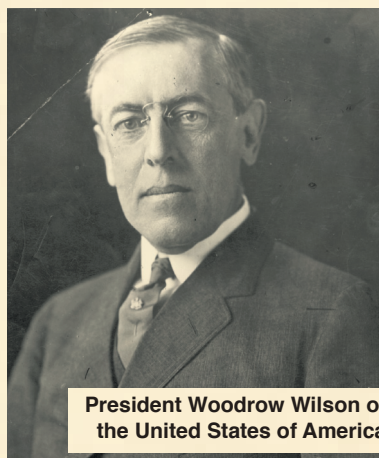
THE American President, Woodrow Wilson, yesterday declared that the USA would not take sides in the war.

Speaking to Congress, Mr Wilson said that "every man who really loves America will act and speak in the true spirit of neutrality, which is the spirit of impartiality and fairness and friendliness to all concerned."

The President pointed out that many American citizens and their ancestors come from countries that are currently engaged in conflict, including Britain, Germany and France.

He said: "some will wish one nation, others another, to succeed in the momentous struggle," before going on to call on Americans to think first and foremost of the United States, and not take sides.

President Wilson appears to be concerned that the conflict could affect relations between different communities in America. "The people of the United States," he said, "whose love of their country and whose loyalty to its government should unite them as Americans all, may be divided in camps of hostile opinion. Such divisions amongst us would be fatal to our peace of mind."



President Woodrow Wilson of the United States of America

## Japan declares war

24 August 1914

JAPAN yesterday declared war on Germany.

The Asian power, a British ally since 1902, was approached for support by Britain earlier this month, in order to help out with the destruction of German Empire vessels around China.

Japan, which is keen to gain control over Germany's territories in the Pacific Ocean, sent an ultimatum to Germany on 14 August. It demanded the following:

(1) That the German navy withdraw armed vessels of all kinds immediately from Japanese and Chinese waters, and to disarm at once those which cannot be withdrawn.

(2) To deliver on a date not later than 15 September to the Imperial Japanese authorities, the entire leased territory of Kiao-Chau, with a view to the eventual restoration of the same to China.

The Germans never replied to the ultimatum, so Prime Minister Count Okuma formally declared war yesterday. Kiao-Chau is a territory in Imperial China that has belonged to Germany since 1898. It is the home base of the German Navy's East Asia Squadron.

Members of the Japanese Army outside the Imperial Palace



## Germans destroy Belgian city

Crowds gather in the rain in the Place Rogier, Brussels, to watch German troops as they march into the Belgian capital on 20 August



30 August 1914

THERE are reports that the German army has destroyed much of the Belgian city of Louvain.

The city fell to the German First Army on 19 August. Germany has continued its invasion of Belgium, despite the country being neutral and worldwide criticism of the actions of the German leader, Kaiser Wilhelm II.

A Belgian force attempted to repel the Germans

on 25 August, but was met with a brutal response. Members of the German army are said to have burnt and looted large sections of Louvain, with libraries containing ancient texts ruined and the university library utterly wrecked. Over 300,000 books at the university are believed to have been destroyed.

Reports also indicate there have been massacres of local people, with mass shootings of men, women and children in the city. The atrocity in Louvain does not appear to have changed the German strategy – their army continues to march through Belgium.