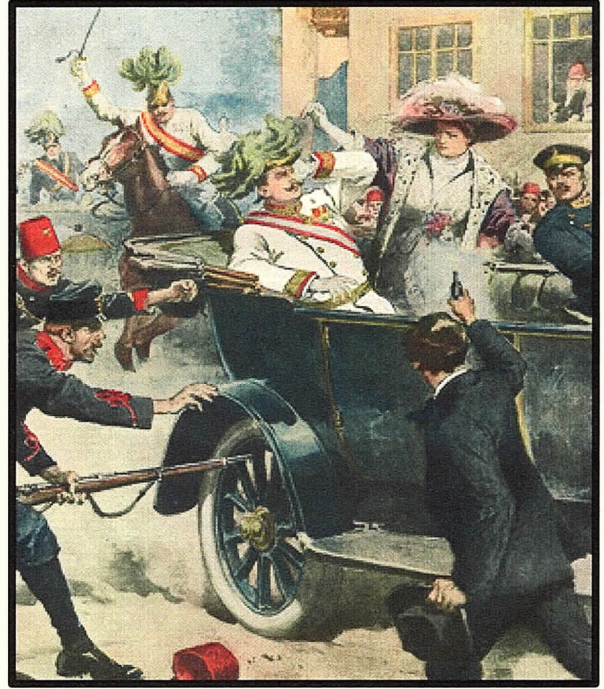


Countries Established from WWI

The trigger for World War I was the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria, heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary and his wife Sophie, Duchess of Hohenberg, by Yugoslav nationalist Gavrilo Princip in Sarajevo on June 28, 1914. This set off a diplomatic crisis when Austria-Hungary delivered an ultimatum to the Kingdom of Serbia and, as a result, entangled-international-alliances, formed over the previous decades, were invoked. Within weeks the major powers were at war, and the conflict soon spread around the world.



Assassination Illustrated by Achille Beltrame

On July 28, 1914 Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia. Russia declared general mobilization on July 30, 1914. Germany presented an ultimatum to Russia to demobilize, when they refused, war was declared on Russia on August 1, 1914. Japan entered the war on the side of the Allies on August 23, 1914. Seizing this opportunity with Germany's distraction in the War; Japan expanded their influence in China and the Pacific. Outnumbered on the Eastern Front, Russia urged France to open a second front in the west.

Resentment over the defeat in the Franco-Prussian War and the resolve to regain Alsace-Lorraine, France accepted Russia's plea for assistance. On August 1, 1914, France mobilized Germany declared war on August 3, 1914. Germany invaded neutral Belgium and Luxembourg before moving towards France from the North. This led to the United Kingdom declaring war on Germany on August 4, 1914, due to their violation of Belgian neutrality.

The German march on Paris was halted in the Battle of Marne, also known as the Western Front which settled into a battle of attrition. The Germans stopped the invasion of East Prussia in the battles of Tannenberg and the Masurian Lakes. The Ottoman Empire joined the Central Powers, opening fronts in the Caucasus, Mesopotamia, and the Sinai Peninsula, in November 1914.

In 1915 - 1916, Italy and Romania joined the Allies and Bulgaria joined the Central Powers. After seven U.S. merchant ships were sunk by German submarines and the revelation they desired Mexico to affirm war on the U.S.; war was declared on April 6, 1917. After the stunning German Spring Offensive on the Western Front in 1918, the Allies drove the Germans to retreat in the Hundred Days Offensive.

On November 4, 1918, the Austro-Hungarian empire agreed to the Armistice of Villa Giusti. Germany agreed to the armistice on November 11, 1918, ending the war in victory for the Allies. When World War I ended the German Empire, Russian Empire, Austro-Hungarian Empire and the Ottoman Empire ceased to exist.



Memorial Church Sarajevo, Archduke Ferdinand, and Duchess Sophie and the Archduke

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Treaty of Versailles

The New Countries Established

This exhibit will show Europe prior to World War I, the countries established from the German Empire, Russian Empire, Austro-Hungarian Empire, the Ottoman Empire, excerpts from the Treaty of Versailles, and Europe post World War I, by the usage of postage stamps.

Europe Before World War I

Described as the “*War to End All Wars*”, more than 70 million military personnel, including 60 million Europeans, were mobilized in one of the largest wars in history. The war drew in the world's economic great powers, assembled in two opposing alliances; the Allies; the Russian Empire, the French Third Republic, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland versus the Central Powers of Germany and Austria-Hungary.



European Map Pre-World War I

The Triple Alliance was composed of Austria-Hungary, Germany, and Italy. Since Austria-Hungary took offensive against the alliance, Italy did not join the Central Powers. The alliances expanded as nations entered the war: Italy, Japan and the U. S. joined the Allies, the Ottoman Empire and Bulgaria joined the Central Powers.



*King Nicholas I of Montenegro
King Peter I & Alexander I of Serbia
King Ferdinand I of Romania
Allied Powers*

*Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany
Tsar Ferdinand I of Bulgaria
King Franz Joseph of Austria-Hungary
Central Powers*

Austria

On October 21, 1918, the elected German members of the parliament of Imperial Austria met in Vienna as the Provisional National Assembly for German Austria. On October 30, 1918, the assembly founded the Republic of German Austria by appointing a new government. On November 11, 1918, the emperor declared he would not take part in state business anymore. On November 12, 1918, German Austria, by law, declared itself to be a democratic republic and part of the new German republic.

On the same day it drafted a provisional constitution that stated that “German-Austria is a democratic republic” and “German-Austria is an integral part of the German Reich”. The Treaty of Saint Germain and the Treaty of Versailles explicitly forbid union between Austria and Germany. The treaties forced German-Austria to rename itself “Republic of Austria”. Austria was formed by splitting from the Austro-Hungarian Empire.



Stamps of 1916 – 1918 overprinted “Deutschösterreich”

Czechoslovakia

The area was long a part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire until the empire collapsed at the end of World War I. The new state was founded by Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk who served as the first president from November 14, 1918 to December 14, 1935.

During World War I small numbers of Czechoslovakians fought with the Allies in France and Italy, while large numbers deserted to Russia in exchange for its support for the independence of Czechoslovakia from the Austrian Empire.

Bohemia and Moravia, under the Austrian rule, were Czechoslovakian speaking industrial centers, while Slovakia, which was part of the Kingdom of Hungary, which was an undeveloped agricultural region. Conditions were much better for the development of a mass national movement in the Czechoslovakian lands than in Slovakia.

The Bohemian Kingdom ceased to exist in 1918 when it was incorporated into Czechoslovakia. Czechoslovakia was founded in October 1918, as one of the successor states of the Austro-Hungarian Empire at the end of World War I. It consists of the territories of Bohemia, Moravia, Slovakia, and Carpathian Ruthenia.



Bohemian Lion Breaking its Chains



Mother and Child

Stamps issued in 1918 – 1919 commemorating the first anniversary of Czechoslovakian independence. They were sold for the benefit of Legionnaires' orphans.

Estonia

In 1917, after the February Revolution, the governorate of Estonia was expanded to include Estonian speaking areas of Livonia and was granted autonomy, enabling formation of the Estonian Provincial Assembly.

Bolsheviks seized power during the October Revolution, and disbanded the Provincial Assembly. However, the Provincial Assembly established the Salvation Committee, and during the short interlude between Russian retreat and German arrival, the committee declared the independence of Estonia on February 24, 1918, and formed the Estonian Provisional Government.

German occupation immediately followed, but after their defeat in World War I the Germans were forced to hand over power to the Provisional Government on November 19, 1918.



Stamps issued 1918 - 1919

The first postage stamps of Estonia were issued in November 1918, just a few days after the armistice that ended World War I. The four definitive stamps of Estonia shown above were issued in 1918 and in 1919. The stamps are lithographed on unwatermarked paper, and they are imperforate. The design consists of tablets containing the inscription EESTI POST and the denomination. The background has a floral pattern.



Stamps issued 1919 - 1920

The six pictorial definitive stamps of Estonia shown above are printed on unwatermarked paper. Some of the stamps are inscribed “Eesti Vabariik” or “Republic of Estonia”. The four common designs used for all these stamps are as follows; denomination numeral, seagulls, sun and a Viking ship.

Finland

After the 1917, February Revolution, the position of Finland as part of the Russian Empire was questioned, mainly by Social Democrats. Since the head of state was the tsar of Russia, it was not clear who the chief executive of Finland was after the revolution. Controlled by social democrats the Parliament, passed the so-called Power Act to give the highest authority to the Parliament. The Russian Provisional Government rejected this Act and decided to dissolve the Parliament.

New elections were conducted, in which right-wing parties won with a slim majority. Some social democrats refused to accept the result and still claimed that the dissolution of the parliament was extralegal. The two nearly equally powerful political blocs, the right-wing parties and the social democratic party, were highly antagonized.

The October Revolution in Russia changed the geopolitical situation anew. Suddenly, the right-wing parties in Finland started to reconsider their decision to block the transfer of highest executive power from the Russian government to Finland, as the Bolsheviks took power in Russia. Rather than acknowledge the authority of the Power Law of a few months earlier, the right-wing government declared independence on December 6, 1917.



Stamps issued 1917 – 1929 depicting the “Arms of the Republic”

Hungary

After the Assassination in Sarajevo, the Hungarian prime minister and his cabinet tried to avoid the outbreak and escalating of a war in Europe, but their diplomatic efforts were unsuccessful. Austria - Hungary drafted 9 million soldiers in World War I on the side of Germany, Bulgaria and Turkey.

The troops raised in the Kingdom of Hungary spent little time defending the actual territory of Hungary, with the exception of the Brusilov Offensive in June 1916, and a few months later the Romanian army made an attack into Transylvania both of which were repelled. In comparison, of the total army, Hungary's loss ratio was more than any other nations of Austria-Hungary.

The Eastern front of the Allied (Entente) Powers completely collapsed. The Austro-Hungarian Empire then withdrew from all defeated countries. On the Italian front, the Austro - Hungarian army made no progress against Italy after January 1918. Despite great Eastern successes, Germany suffered complete defeat on the more important Western front.

By 1918, the economic situation had deteriorated and uprisings in the army had become commonplace. In the capital cities, the Austrian and Hungarian leftist liberal movements and their leaders supported the separatism of ethnic minorities. Austria-Hungary signed a general armistice in Padua on November 3, 1918. In October 1918, Hungary's union with Austria was dissolved.



Stamps of 1916 – 1918 overprinted “KÖZTÁRSASÁG (Republic)”

Lithuania

World War I rapidly reached the territory of Lithuania. Germany's push to the east drove the forces of the Russian Empire to retreat. By the end of 1915, Germany occupied the entire territory of Lithuania and Courland. On September 18 – 22, 1917, the Vilnius Conference elected the Council of Lithuania. At the conference, it was decided to re-establish the state of Lithuania with its ethnographic borders and the capital of Vilnius.

Following the geopolitical situation, on December 11, 1917, the Council of Lithuania adopted a resolution announcing the restoration of an independent state of Lithuania with the capital in Vilnius and severing all ties that had ever been established with other countries and calling for the eternal union with Germany. As Germany was losing the war, a decision had been made to abandon this union. A resolution adopted on February 16, 1918, was recognized as the Act of Independence of Lithuania.

It restored an independent state of Lithuania governed by democratic principles, with Vilnius as its capital. The Act also stated that Lithuania's relations with other countries will be established by the democratically elected Constituent Assembly of Lithuania. Following the capitulation of Germany in November 1918, the idea of the monarchy was abandoned, leaving the question about the ruling system to the constituent assembly. On November 11, 1918, the first Provisional Constitution of Lithuania was written. At the same time, the army, the government, and other state institutions began to be organized.



Issued in 1919 depicting the White Knight "Vytis"

Poland

During World War I, all the Allies agreed on the reconstitution of Poland that United States President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed in Point 13 of his Fourteen Points. A total of 2 million Polish troops fought with the armies of the three occupying powers, and 450,000 died. Shortly after the armistice with Germany in November 1918, Poland regained its independence as the Second Polish Republic. It reaffirmed its independence after a series of military conflicts, the most notable being the Polish - Soviet War when Poland inflicted a crushing defeat on the Red Army at the Battle of Warsaw.

During this period, Poland successfully managed to fuse the territories of the three former partitioning powers into a cohesive nation state. Railways were restructured to direct traffic towards Warsaw instead of the former imperial capitals, a new network of national roads was gradually built up and a major seaport was opened on the Baltic Coast. This allowed Polish exports and imports to bypass the politically charged Free City of Danzig.

Stamps of the Warsaw Local Post Surcharged



*Statue of Sigismund III
King of Poland & Sweden*



Coat of Arms of Warsaw



Polish Heraldic Eagle



*Sobieski Monument
John III Sobieski, King of Poland*

The four pictorial local stamps of Warsaw, shown above, were overprinted and revalued, as regular definitive Polish stamps, on November 17, 1918, six days after the armistice, ending World War I. The overprint reads *Poczta Polska* (*Polish Postal Service*), and the revaluation amounts are denominated in Polish FENIG.

Yugoslavia

Following the assassination of Austrian Archduke Francis Ferdinand by the Bosnian Serb Gavrilo Princip, the subsequent invasion of Serbia, and the outbreak of World War I, South Slavic nationalism escalated and Slavic nationalists called for the independence and unification of the South Slavic nationalities of Austria-Hungary.

The creation of the state was supported by pan-Slavists and Serbian nationalists. For the pan-Slavic movement, all of the South Slav (Yugoslav) people had united into a single state. For Serbian nationalists, the desired goal of uniting the majority of the Serb population across south-eastern Europe into one state was also achieved. Furthermore, as Serbia already had a government, military, and police force, it was the logical choice to form the nucleus of the Yugoslav state.

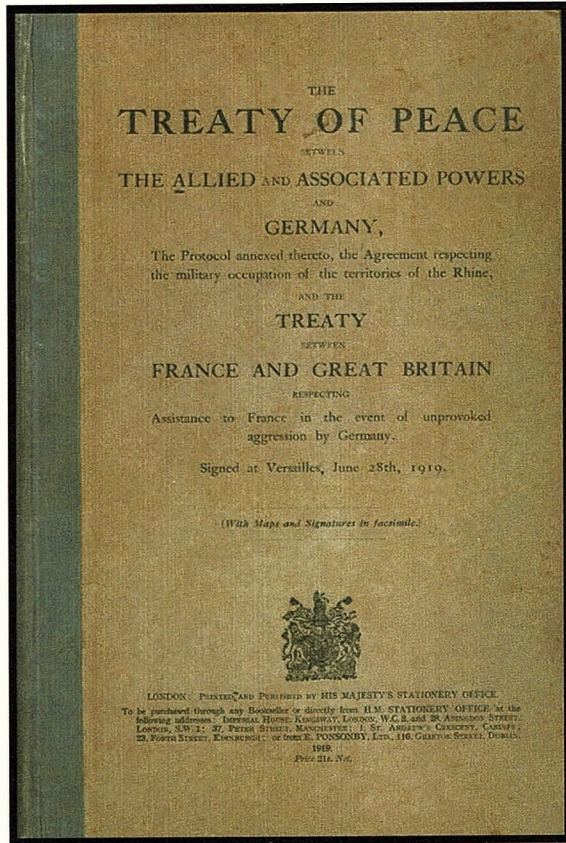
In 1916, the Serbian Parliament in exile decided on the creation of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia at a meeting inside the Municipal Theatre of Corfu. The Kingdom was formed On December 1, 1918, by the merger of the provisional State of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs with the formerly independent Kingdom of Serbia. Initially, the Kingdom was officially called the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes but the term “Yugoslavia” was its colloquial name from its origins. The official name of the state was changed to “Kingdom of Yugoslavia” by King Alexander I.



1910 Stamps of Bosnia and Herzegovina Overprinted or Surcharged in Black or Red

Treaty of Versailles

Treaty of Peace between the Allied and Associated Powers and Germany



English Version on display in the Hall of Mirrors in the Palace of Versailles, Paris, France¹

“The United States of America, the British Empire, France, Italy and Japan, these Powers being described in the present Treaty as the Principal Allied and Associated Powers, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, China, Cuba, Ecuador, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, the Hedjaz, Honduras, Liberia, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Roumania, the Serb-Croat-Slovene State, Siam, Czechoslovakia and Uruguay, these Powers constituting with the Principal Powers mentioned above the Allied and Associated Powers, of the one part;

And Germany of the other part;

Bearing in Mind that on the request of the Imperial German Government an armistice was granted on November 11, 1918 to Germany by the Principal Allied and Associated Powers in order that a Treaty of Peace might be concluded with her, and The Allied and Associated Powers being equally desirous that the war in which they were successively involved directly or indirectly and which originated in the declaration of war by Austria-Hungary on July 28, 1914 against Serbia, the declaration of war by Germany against Russia on August 1, 1914, and against France on August 3, 1914, and in the invasion of Belgium, should be replaced by a firm and durable peace.

Who having communicated their full powers found in good and due form have agreed as follows: From the coming into force of the present Treaty the state of war will terminate. From that moment and subject to the provisions of this Treaty official relations with Germany, and with any of the German States, will be resumed by the Allied and Associated Powers.”

Per the treaty Germany was stripped of 25,000 square miles of territory and 7 million people. In Western Europe, Germany was required to cede control of the Eupen-Malmedy area.

To compensate for the destruction of French coal mines, Germany is to cede the output of the Saar coalmines to France and control of the Saar to the League of Nations for 15 years.



Postcard Issued for the Signing of the Treaty of Versailles by Germany.

In Eastern Europe, Germany was mandated to acknowledge and recognize the independence of Czechoslovakia and cede parts of the province of Upper Silesia.

Germany cedes the city of Danzig, the hinterland, and the delta Vistula River on the Baltic Sea, for the League of Nations to establish the Free City of Danzig.

Germany acknowledges and agrees to respect as permanent and inalienable the independence of all the territories which were part and created from the former Russian Empire, Austro-Hungarian Empire and the Ottoman Empire. Article 119 of the treaty required Germany to renounce sovereignty over former colonies and Article 22 converted the territories into League of Nations mandates under the control of Allied states.

The Paris Peace Conference, also known as Versailles Peace Conference, was the meeting of the victorious Allied Powers following the end of World War I to set the peace terms for the defeated Central Powers. Involving diplomats from 27 countries and nationalities, the major or main decisions were the creation of the League of Nations.

There are five peace treaties with the defeated states; the awarding of German and Ottoman overseas possessions as “mandates”, chiefly to Britain and France; reparations imposed on Germany; and the drawing of new national boundaries with plebiscites to better reflect ethnic boundaries.

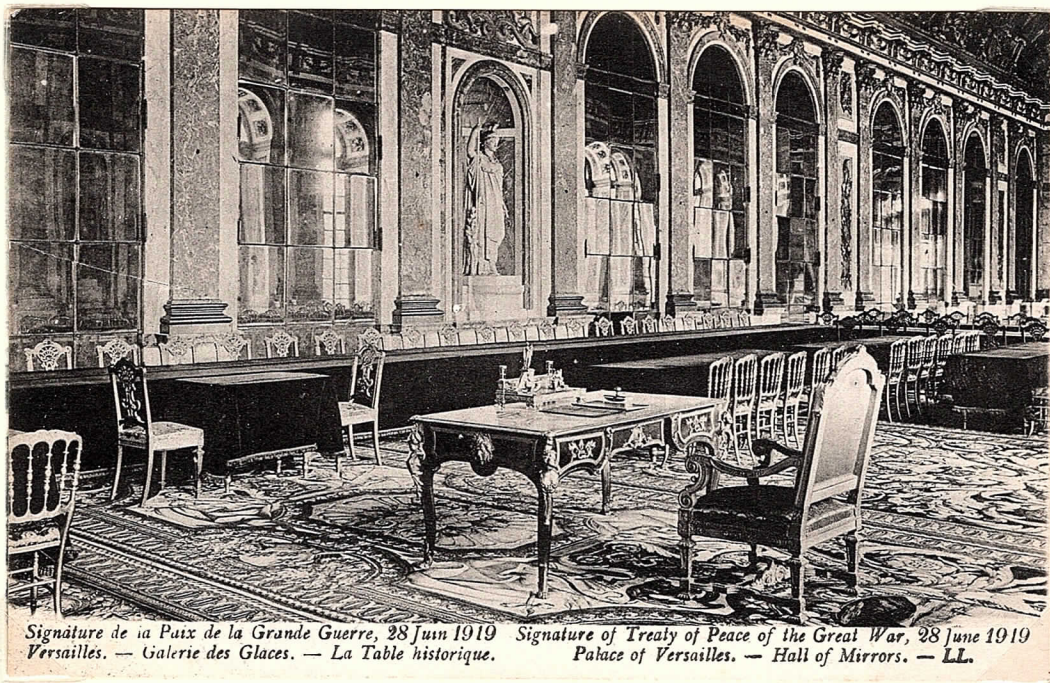
The five major powers France, Britain, Italy, Japan and the United States controlled the Conference. And The “Big Four” were the Prime Minister of France; the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom; the President of the United States; and the Prime Minister of Italy. They met together informally 145 times and made all the major decisions, which in turn were ratified by the others. The conference began on January 18, 1919.

Delegates from 27 nations were assigned to 52 commissions, which held 1,646 sessions to prepare reports, with the help of many experts, on topics ranging from prisoners of war, undersea cables, international aviation, and responsibility for the war.

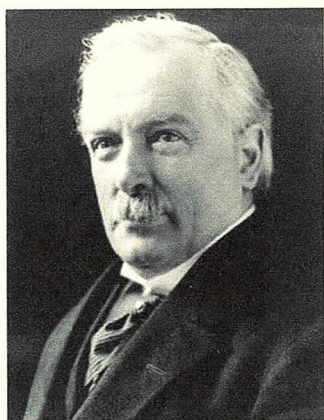
Key recommendations were folded into the Treaty of Versailles with Germany, which had 15 chapters and 440 clauses, as well as treaties for the other defeated nations. The conference came to an end on January 21, 1920 with the inaugural General Assembly of the League of Nations.



Allenstein stamps overprinted "TRAITE DE VERSAILLES"



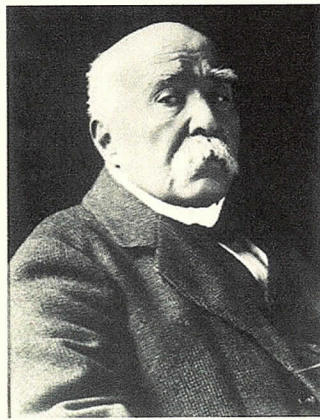
Writing desk in Hall of Mirrors where the Treaty of Versailles was Signed.



*David Lloyd George
British Prime Minister*



*Vittorio Emanuele Orlando Italian
Minister of the Interior*



*Georges Clemenceau
French Prime Minister*



*Thomas Woodrow Wilson
President of the United States*

The heads of the "Big Four" nations at the Paris Peace Conference, and signatories to the Treaty of Versailles.



*Hermann Müller
German Minister for Foreign Affairs*



*Johannes Bell
German Colonial Minister*

Both Ministers travelled to Versailles to sign the treaty on behalf of Germany.

The New Countries Established

The Paris Peace Conference along with The Treaty of Versailles established the new countries and the dates established as listed below:

<u>Country</u>	<u>Flag</u>	<u>Year(s)</u>	<u>Country</u>	<u>Flag</u>	<u>Year(s)</u>
Austria		1918 – 1919	Latvia		1918
Czechoslovakia		1918 – 1919	Lithuania		1918
Estonia		1918 – 1919	Poland		1918
Finland		1917 – 1929	Yugoslavia		1918
Hungary		1918 – 1919			

National borders were redrawn, with nine independent nations restored or created, and Germany's colonies were parceled out among the victors. During the Paris Peace Conference of 1919, the Big Four powers (Britain, France, Italy, and the United States) imposed their terms in a series of treaties. The League of Nations was formed with the aim of preventing any repetition of such a conflict. This effort failed, and economic depression, renewed nationalism, weakened successor states, and feelings of humiliation contributed to World War II.



European Map Post World War I