

October 1st, 1918

At the Gates of Peace [Day 40]



Allenby Enters Damascus

The ultimate success of General Allenby's campaign is confirmed when early on **1 October 1918**, the Arab Army and his own Expeditionary Force enter Damascus.

This marks a very important milestone after a long campaign that started in the Arabian Desert and in Egypt, and crossed the whole of Palestine.

With Bulgaria now fallen, the Turks cannot hope for any more help from Germany. The loss of Syria spells the end of the war for the Sublime Porte.

With their capital Constantinople now threatened from both sides, with General Franchet D'Esperey moving east through Bulgaria and Rumania, and Allenby driving through Syria, the next days will be occupied by diplomatic back-and-forth for a plausible end to hostilities between Allies and Turks.

— Already, the Allies are debating, in Paris, who gets what of the soon-to-be-defunct Ottoman Empire. Some of the spoils of this great victory are still deep in the ground.

•Wilson, Lawrence of Arabia, 571; •Fromkin, A Peace to End All Peace, 364-5; Mango, Ataturk, 181.



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October 2nd, 1918 [Day 41]

To the Bitter End!

September/October 1918						
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
			26	27	28	29
30	1	2				

Five Days of Truth

Marshal Foch' Great Assault proved an incredible success.

It started on September 26th with the French-American advance in the Argonne-Meuse area,

and continued for a week with three other army groups ramming at the German defences.

At Foch's command, the Grand Assault was relentless in pushing everywhere against the Hindenburg Line, burning tens of Allied infantry divisions to the core in some of the fiercest fighting of the War. This was a real moment of truth.

In Spa, Field Marshal Hindenburg himself is now acknowledging that the war is irremediably lost.

But the Allied fighting troops do not know that. For them the week of Thursday, September 26th to Wednesday, October 2nd was marked by sleepless exertions followed by total exhaustion.

Canadians were no exception. Friday to Tuesday, General Currie, at the spearhead of First Army against Canal du Nord, drove two of his five divisions beyond all usual limits.

On 2 October 1918, the victory for them does not feel like a victory. After five days of daring but terribly punishing attacks, the bitter taste of blood remains in their mouths.

— But the Grand Assault broke the Line. With this last good defence punctured along the whole front, there are no more lines to hide behind.

Hindenburg, and all that stands for him, is *now kaput*.

For more information: •Dennis, Reluctant Warriors, Chapters 7 and 8. •Jonathan Boff, 'Foch's Grand Offensive': the biggest battle you've never heard of», Historyextra, <https://www.historyextra.com/period/first-world-war/ww1-fochs-grand-hundred-days-offensive-battle-allies-germany-france-armistice/>



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October 3rd, 1918 [Day 40]

A Royalist Liberal to the Rescue of Hohenzollern



Act 5, Scene 1: Enters Maximilian, Prince of Baden

The High Command of the German Army has now returned the reins of power to the civilian government. Kaiser Wilhelm II is faced with the challenge of negotiating an armistice at the best possible price. Any further combat by the German Army will have at its sole purpose to posture so as to extract optimum diplomatic advantage.

Wilhelm is now convinced that the best avenue of negotiation must go through United States President Woodrow Wilson.

Wilson's «Fourteen Points» of January 1918 offered an olive branch that did not have the thorns that France, Italy and Great Britain seem incapable of removing from their branch.

Wilhelm understands that to gain Wilson's sympathies, Germany must make grand gestures toward democratization and demilitarization, and pay abundant lip service to Wilson's somewhat idealistic principles, reiterated in his «Four Principles to the End of the War» of 4 July 1918. But the Hohenzollerns must remain on the German throne. That's his bottom line.

— Wilhelm's replacement of Chancellor von Hertling, on **3 October 1918**, by «the one prominent royalist liberal of the empire»¹, his second cousin **Maximilian Prince of Baden**, is an attempt at squaring that circle.

¹●Allan Palmer, The kaiser, p. 207, quoted in Terraine, To Win a War, p. 180; ●Pitt, 1918, p. 268; ●Fischer, Germany's Aims, 635-7.



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October 4, 1918 [Day 39]

Wilson! Kamerad!



President Wilson's Fourteen Points

1. Open diplomacy
2. Freedom of the Seas
3. Removal of economic barriers
4. Reduction of armaments
5. Adjustment of colonial claims
6. Conquered territories in Russia
7. Preservation of Belgian sovereignty
8. Restoration of French territory
9. Redrawing of Italian frontiers
10. Division of Austria-Hungary
11. Redrawing of Balkan boundaries
12. Limitations on Turkey
13. Establishment of an independent Poland
14. Creation of an Association of Nations

Germany and Austria call for Wilson's 14-Points

The new German Government under Chancellor Max of Baden, with Austria in tow, do not waste any time on **4 October 1918** in sending two diplomatic notes to the United States, asking President Wilson to arbitrate negotiations for an Armistice in accordance with the 14-Points that he proposed in January 1918.

The German Chancellor also works on parliamentary policy, writing the white paper «Thoughts on Ethical Imperialism» so as to re-orient German foreign policy in a manner likely to impress Wilson with a fundamental conversion to soft power.

Since the United States has never been an 'Allied' in terms of the London Agreement of 1914, but chose to remain an 'Associated Power,' in the conflict, both the Germans and Wilson himself believe that the United States can act as an honest broker in the negotiations for Armistice.

— Clemenceau and Lloyd George will throw in a veto to this private arrangement faster than it takes to say STOP!

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- Johnstone, Fools' Crusade (1999), p. 171; ●Fromkin, A Peace to End All Peace, p. 164; ●Terraine, To Win a War, p. 183.
 - <http://www.american-historama.org/1913-1928-ww1-prohibition-era/fourteen-points.htm>



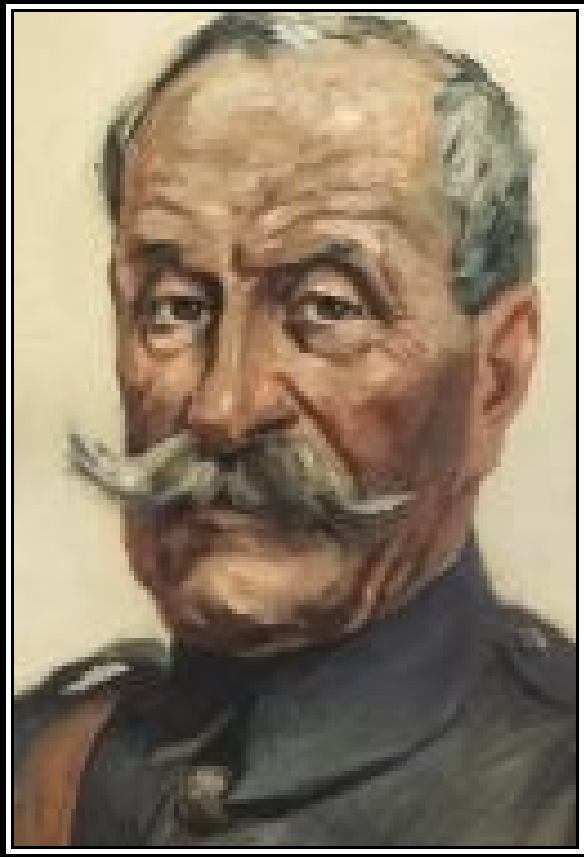
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October 5th, 1918 [Day 38]

The Generallissimo Generalissimating



Maréchal Foch showing his ugly face

Since October 1st, Maréchal Ferdinand Foch, the Commander-in-Chief of the allied armies on the Western front has become convinced that the German Army is in the throes of a great defeat.

The numbers of prisoners is out of proportion with what took place before. His intelligence tells him that it is of utmost importance to not let a moment of relief to allow the kind of quick reorganization for which the Germans are so good.

This is the moment when he becomes ugly. This is particularly felt in the French Army. General Degoutte, in the north, with the Belgian army group, is scolded for suggesting that the offensive there will not start again before 13 October. Foch orders him to get going on the 10th at the latest; he also charges him to convince King Albert to do so.

The Generallissimo, who now travels in his railroad headquarters, being near Alsace on one day and north of Arras the next, also breathes down the necks of Pershing, Pétain and Haig.

He changes Pétain's orders and pushes Haig to not let go of any opportunity to keep the pressure up. He

addresses Pershing for his halts in the Argonne. He is constantly reminding all that the divisions at the front must be pushed until they cannot operate due to complete depletion. He does not want to hear about next year.

— Foch has now gone into the pursuit mode. For him, the withdrawals must be followed on their heel by any exertion that can be extracted from the front line. The enemy must not rest at any cost.

●Général Palat, La part de Foch dans la Victoire (1930), p. 214.



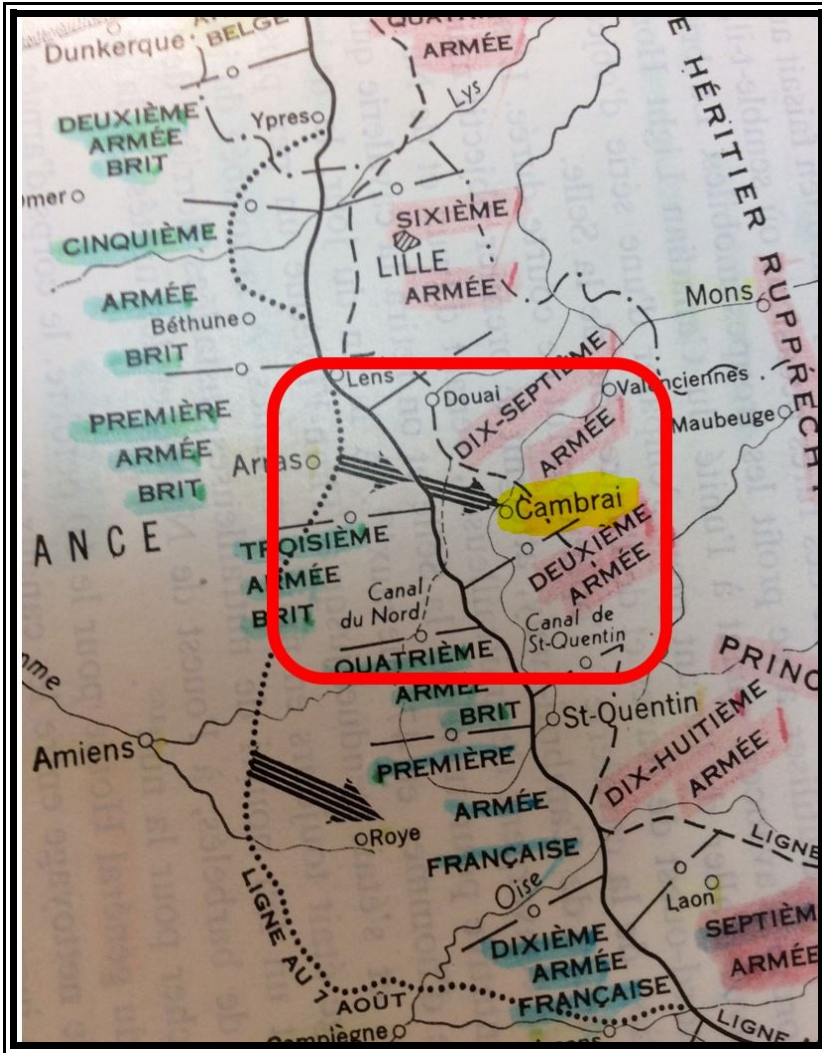
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Le 6 octobre, 1918 [Jour 37]

L'Équipe Byng-Currie Revient pour la Revanche



•Cambrai – Encore une fois

Le général Byng a maintenant réussi à franchir le Canal de L'Escaut entre Proville et Crèvecoeur avec sa Troisième Armée, et se trouve au sud-ouest immédiat de Cambrai, qui est son objectif stratégique depuis la fin de la bataille d'Amiens, la deuxième semaine d'août.

Byng fait face à Cambrai pour la deuxième fois en un an. Le 20 novembre 1917, l'attaque de la Troisième Armée, qui a constitué la première manœuvre de grande envergure pour des blindés, s'est soldée par un échec par manque de renforts dans les derniers jours; les contre-attaques allemandes l'ont repoussée.

Cette fois-ci, fort de son expérience, Byng est déterminé à ne pas laisser échapper cette ville occupée depuis le début de la guerre.

Le général Currie est informé **le 6 octobre 1918** que son corps continuera d'ouvrir la marche pour la Première armée en support de Byng. Il doit préparer ses Deuxième et Troisième divisions pour le 8.

— L'équipe Byng-Currie revient pour un match-revanche.

•Nicholson, *Le Corps expéditionnaire canadien*, chap 14, carte p. 495.



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October 7, 1918 [Day 36]

The Young Pashas Shown the Door of History



Istanbul Recognises the Inevitability of Defeat

After the loss of Damascus, the Ottoman army is in disarray and unable to establish a defensive line to halt General Allenby's pursuit. Total collapse looms in Syria and Lebanon.

Of equal importance was the Allied victory in Macedonia under French General Franchet d'Esperey, which led immediately to the capitulation of Bulgaria, on 30 September.

The loss of Bulgaria severed communications between Germany and Turkey, halting the flow of arms and military

supplies.

In Istanbul, on **7 October 1918**, when it was learned that Germany, with its army in retreat, had approached American President Woodrow Wilson to mediate a ceasefire with the Entente powers, the ruling triumvirate of the Young Turks and their military advisors realised that Turkey had no choice but to seek an end to hostilities.

— The Sublime Porte of Istanbul, the symbol of four and a half centuries of Ottoman power, is being pried open by force. Enver, Talat and Cemal, the Pashas of the formerly «Young Turks», are being shown the Door of History.

●Eugene Rogan, *The Fall of the Ottomans: The Great War in the Middle East, 1914-1920* (2015); ●Philip Mansel, *Constantinople: City of World's Desire, 1453-1924* (1995), Chap 14, «Young Turks», p. 346-79.



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October 8, 1918 [Day 35]

Foch Banging the Table at Versailles



Maréchal Foch's resounding caveat

On 8 October 1918, United States President Wilson answers the two notes from Germany and Austria-Hungary asking him to mediate an armistice. Wilson did not consult the Allies in his reply, suggesting only a withdrawal from France as a condition.

This is anathema to the European allies, who cannot agree to such lenient terms.

Maréchal Foch is the first to react to Wilson's overture. From the Military Committee in Versailles, he states that other conditions will have to be included

for any cease-fire.

For him, further military guarantees are indispensable. He wants the allied armies to be in position to prevent any rising of the German army. His requirements include having bridgeheads across the Rhine; the seizing of all Central Powers' war material of any importance; and the complete restitution of intact French and Belgium railway systems.

Whether Foch acts as a Military Adviser to the Council or as the Commander-in-Chief of the Allied forces in the West in this irate pronouncement is a moot point.

— What is not a moot point is that his political influence among international delegates is strongly felt.

●Palat, Le part de Foch dans la Victoire, p. 224; ●Terraine, To Win a War, p. 195-7; ●Hankey, Supreme Command, II: p. 854; ●AJP Taylor, The First World War, p. 238. ●Picture IWM, H.A. Oliver, Four Military Representatives of the SWC, Art 4214.



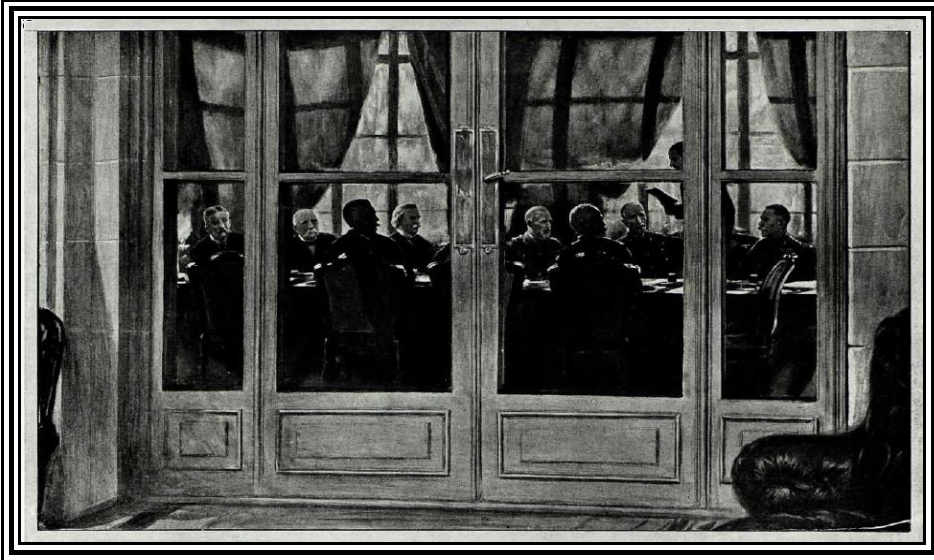
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Le 9 octobre, 1918 [Jour 34]

Le Président Wilson Force la Note



Relations entre Versailles et Washington

Le Président des États Unis est un idéaliste qui essaie d'appliquer aux Affaires étrangères la même vision moralisatrice qu'il utilise pour gérer les affaires intérieures de son pays.

En ce sens, Woodrow Wilson tente de négocier bilatéralement les conditions d'armistice avec les autorités allemandes, ce qui antagonise énormément ses relations avec les Européens, notamment avec Foch et Clemenceau.

Dans sa 'noble candeur', croit Clemenceau, Wilson ne comprend pas à quel point la France a souffert aux mains de l'armée allemande depuis le début de la guerre: pour le Président, semble-t-il, la question n'est que de restituer l'Alsace-Lorraine aux Français et de substituer un gouvernement élu démocratiquement à la caste militaire allemande.

— **Le 9 octobre 1918**, trois ministres des affaires étrangères réunis à Versailles écrivent à Wilson l'enjoignant de les consulter dans toute correspondance future avec l'ennemi commun.

●René Albrecht-Carrié, *A diplomatic history of Europe since the Congress of Vienna*, Revised edition, New York: Harper & Row, 1973), p. 360-361. ● Jacques Droz, *Histoire diplomatique de 1648 à 1919*, (Paris, 1972), p. 538-546. ●Hankey, *Supreme Command*, II: 854-5; ●Barnett, *The Swordbearers*, p. 392.



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October 10, 1918 [Day 33]

Sinking More Ships Doesn't Help

The sinking of the *Hirano Maru* and the RMS *Leinster*

With the Royal Navy controlling the sea lanes in the North Sea and effectively blocking all sea trade with Germany, the German Imperial Navy must depend on its submarine fleet for its naval warfare. Since the outbreak of the war, U-Boats have sunk, damaged or captured a total of 7,649 vessels, including 94 in October 1918.

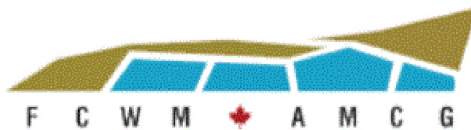
The indiscriminate attack on defenceless vessels, such as fishing schooners and passenger ships like the *Hirano Maru* from Japan, hit on October 4th (292 dead), and the **RMS *Leinster***, hit on **10 October 1918** (530 dead), is an indication of the desperation of the Germans who know they are facing a losing war.

Only a few days before, U.S. President Woodrow Wilson received a message from the German Government requesting that he arrange the immediate conclusion of an armistice. Wilson now replies saying, among other things, that there can be no peace if Germany continues to attack passenger ships.

The Admiral of the German High Seas Fleet subsequently sends an order to all U-boats not to attack merchant vessels since it will jeopardize ongoing peace negotiations.

— Clearly, the sinking of ships threatens the possibility of peace talks to end the First World War.

Reference: Sinking of RMS Leister < <http://www.rmsleinster.com/sinking/sinking3.htm>>;
Ships hit by U-boats WWI < https://www.uboot.net/wwi/ships_hit/>

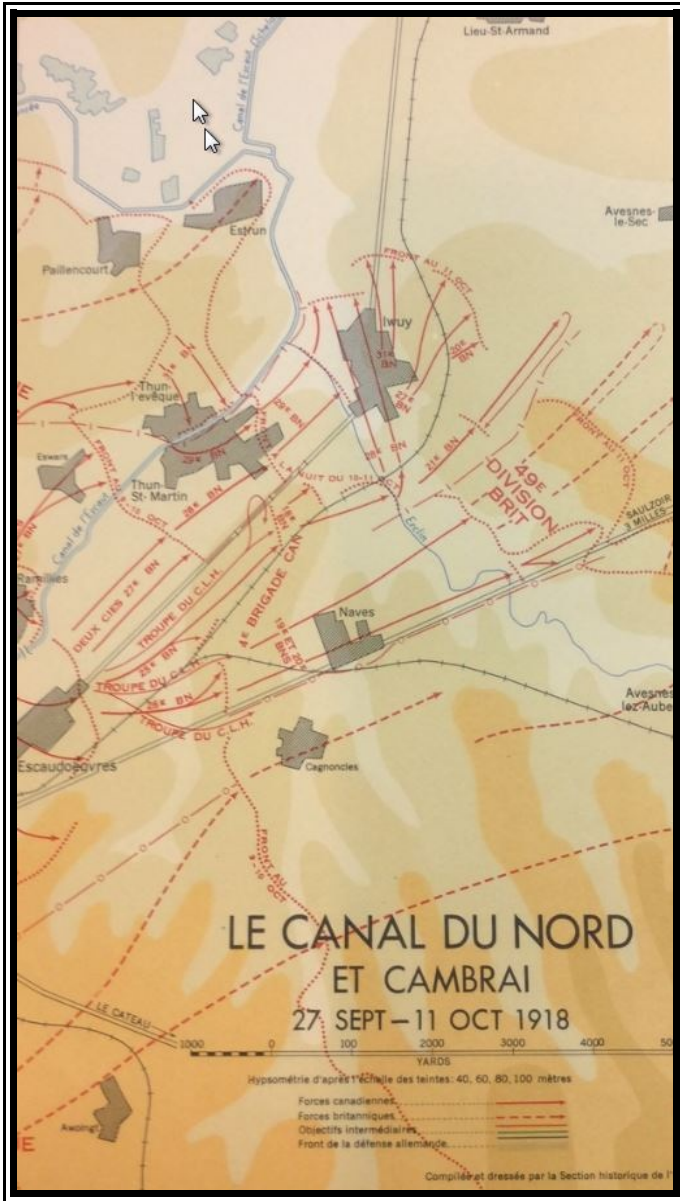


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Le 11 octobre, 1918 [Jour 32]

Pauvre Infanterie!



Le Canal de l'Escaut et la fin d'une étape

Avec la traversée du Canal de l'Escaut, le **11 octobre 1918**, le Corps canadien termine une campagne en deux grandes étapes: la Bataille d'Arras, commencée le 26 août, marquée surtout par la traversée de la ligne Drocourt-Quéant, et la bataille du Canal du Nord et Cambrai, qui se termine aujourd'hui.

Il faut se rappeler que ces deux offensives à l'est d'Arras, ont suivi de près la Bataille d'Amiens du 8 août.

Cette dernière avait coûté près de 12,000 hommes au Corps canadien, entre le 8 août et le 20 août.

Entre le 22 août et le 11 octobre, c'est plus de 30,000 hommes qui ont été retirés des combats, morts, blessés ou disparus.

Ces pertes de 42,000 hommes en 64 jours s'inscrivent dans un corps d'armée qui compte un peu plus de 100,000 Canadiens.

Il s'agit donc de pertes de plus de 40%, dont probablement 80% sont infligées aux 50,000 hommes de l'infanterie, soit 70% de leur nombre!

•Nicholson, Le Corps expéditionnaire canadien, p. 454, 498.



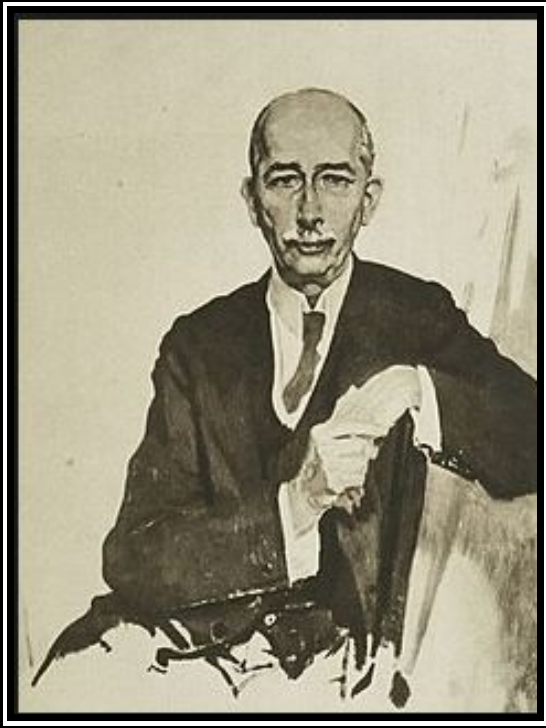
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October 12, 1918 [Day 31]

Reaching to a Mirage



Max of Baden's reply to Wilson's Note

On 12 October 1918, the Government of Germany responds to President Wilson's diplomatic note of October 8th. It is obvious that the German Government is quite relieved to see that the President seems to have limited objectives in his conditions for an armistice.

However, since October 8th, things have changed quite a bit. The private representative of the President of the United States in Paris, 'Colonel' Edward M. House, has been receiving quite an earful about the objections that the Allies have on the Fourteen Points as a basis of negotiations with the Germans.

In addition to letters sent to the President by Foreign Ministers, House has been quite frank with the President that his offers so far do not represent the Allies' views and that no armistice can be brokered without their consent.

By accepting the three conditions presented by the President and by asking for a mixed commission to negotiate the process of evacuation, the Chancellor of Germany, Max

of Baden, is dealing with a mirage that no longer exists.

— Maréchal Foch's military conditions expressed at Versailles have raised the bar where the Fourteen Points cannot reach.

— Not all agree with Foch, but all do not agree with Wilson.

●Hankey, Supreme Command, II: 855-7.



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October 13, 1918

Cause for Anticipated Celebration



The little jig of Danny Park

The reply of the German Government to President Wilson's note of 8 October, which has just been communicated to the British Government, convinces Prime Minister David Lloyd George that a special session of the Cabinet must be called to define the war aims in a manner that will clarify the exigencies for an armistice.

The meeting takes place at Danny Park, Sir George Riddell's house at Hurstpierpoint, in West Sussex, on **13 October 1918**.

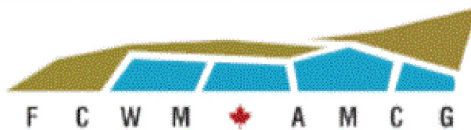
With close associates such as Bonar Law, Balfour, Churchill, Reading, the First Sea Lord and the CIGS, Lloyd George spells out, in a telegram to Wilson, the views of the British Government as to what has to be demanded of the Germans for an armistice to be considered.

Central to the proceedings must be the views of military authorities as to what will constitute a surrender without possibility of a return to hostilities.

— The meeting will be remembered for a little hornpipe jig that the Prime Minister danced at this occasions, when it became so clear that Victory would be achieved in the end.

●Hankey, *Supreme Command*, II: 856. ●The 1918 Lloyd George Garden Party, see for picture:

<https://mediaserver.responsesource.com/press-release/108298/lloyd+george+at+danny+house.jpg>



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October 13, 1918 [Day 30] A New Government in Turkey



Collapse of the Ottoman Government

With Turkey's defeat inevitable, the Unionist cabinet, headed by **Grand Vizier Talat Pasha**, resigned on 8 October.

The triumvirate of "Young Turks," – Talat, Minister of War Enver, and Minister of Marine Cemal, - had been collectively responsible for Ottoman war policy, including the Armenian genocide.

For nearly a full week, the Ottoman empire had no government as it was impossible to find a credible - and willing - statesman to negotiate with the Allies.

On 13 October 1918, Ahmet Izzet Pasha, who had commanded the Ottoman army in the Caucasus, agreed to form a government to conclude a peace agreement.

The new government reached out to the British by sending the most senior prisoner of war, General Charles Townshend (taken prisoner in the disastrous British defeat at Kut) to convey Turkey's intention to end hostilities.

● Eugene Rogan, [The Fall of the Ottomans: The Great War in the Middle East](#)

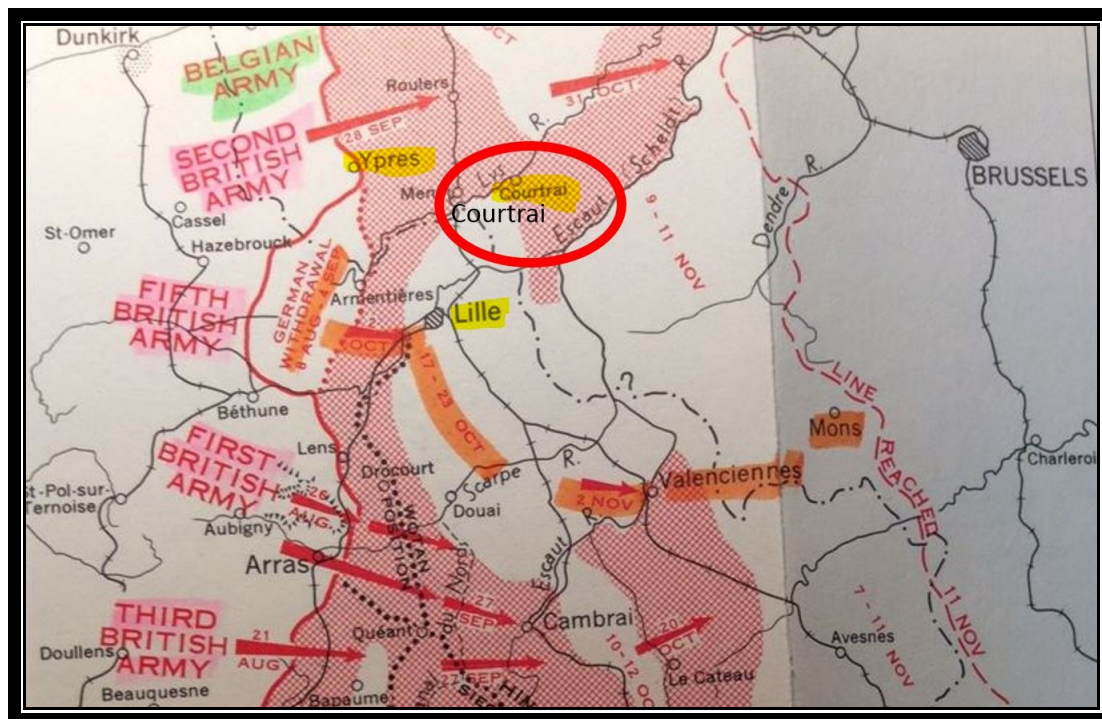


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Le 14 octobre, 1918 [Jour 29] Ypres Loin Derrière



La bataille de Courtrai

Le Maréchal Foch a bien poussé dans le dos du groupe d'armées de Flandre pour qu'il avance le 10 octobre. Mais ce n'est en fait que le **14 octobre 1918** qu'il se met en marche pour pousser vers l'intérieur de la Belgique dans une avance de six jours qui marquera une autre victoire concluante des Cent Jours: la bataille de Courtrai.

L'Armée belge, en excellente forme puisqu'elle a été épargnée des grandes batailles de 1918, constitue le flanc gauche de cette avance le long de la Manche. Elle est appuyée par la Royal Navy qui bombarde les côtes belges.

Pour ce qui est de la Deuxième Armée britannique et des Corps d'armée français attachés au groupe d'armées de Flandre, leur ravitaillement au cours des deux dernières semaines s'est avéré très difficile. Il a plu dans le nord, comme à tous les ans à cette date, et la boue a entravé le transport, dans ces terrains si ravagés l'an dernier par la bataille de Passchendaele.

Mais ce nouveau départ dans le nord donnera aux Deuxième Corps britannique du général Jacob une réputation que ses trois fameuses divisions, 9^e Écossaise, 29^{ème} (l'«Incomparable» des Dardanelles) et 36^{ème} (Ulster), arracheront dans leur progression vers l'Escaut.

•Terraine, *To Win a War*, 201-4.



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October 15, 1918 [Day 28]

Urging for the Bell



The taking of Homs by allied forces in Syria

The progress of allied forces in Palestine and Syria has not stopped at Damascus.

On **15 October 1918** the city of Homs falls from the hands of the Ottomans, who are retreating as best they can.

Istanbul, the costly target of the naval battles of the Dardanelles and

the British-ANZAC landings of Gallipoli, in 1915, is now taken from both sides with no hope of defence.

With the whole east side of the Mediterranean as well as Mesopotamia (Iraq) in allied hands, the Caucasus and the Black Sea will soon be overtaken by forces opposed to the Ottoman-German forces in the Near-East.

— The German Government is hard-pressed to make an armistice deal as soon as possible since its conquests in the east are being retaken. At this pace, nothing will remain of their imperialist designs.

●Hankey, Supreme Command, II: 845.



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October 16, 1918 [Day 27]

President Wilson Gives a Second Twist



American reply of 16 October 1918

The sinking of the Leinster, a ship running between England and Ireland, on 12 October, has done a lot of damage to the diplomatic position of Germany. The loss of its 450 mostly civilian passengers reminds the public how barbarous German Unlimited Submarine Warfare (USW) was in this war.

Wilson's reply to Chancellor Max of Baden's note, **on 16 October 1918**, reflects the admonitions that he has received from Europeans for being too soft on the Germans.

The tone has now changed significantly. Wilson insists that USW must be stopped, that the armistice will be settled between military commanders, with no illusions on the need for preliminary disarmament of the Central powers. Peace negotiations will also be a separate process.

It is now clear that superficial gestures toward democratization and demilitarization of the German polity will not be sufficient.

The British, who were adamant a few days ago, that Wilson was too soft, are now thinking that such tough conditions may now convince the Reichstag to keep on fighting into 1919.

— Clemenceau thinks nothing of the sort.

•A.J.P. Taylor, The First World War, (Penguin, 1976), p. 237-41. •Hankey, Supreme Command, II: p. 856.



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October 17, 1918 [Day 26]

An All-Out Pursuit



The Foxhunt hits the gallop

From this day, the retreat of the Germans becomes so fast that, rather than asking patrols to catch up with them in the morning, after having lost contact during the night, Currie uses cavalry and armoured cars and cyclists to keep the pursuit and maintain contact with the rear of the retreating enemy.

The Motor Machine Guns Brigades are kept employed well ahead. Mobility and vulnerability remain important issues for

these mobile forward elements.

The Forward Division has a Forward Brigade with a Forward unit replaced every day. They go into leapfrogging when too tired.

Artillery directed by air contact patrols becomes a standard 'largely unwritten doctrine', with aircraft scouting and reporting concentrations.

— This will lead to a full week of predictable 'catch-up» tactics, with few serious German counter-attacks.

●Nicholson, Canadian Expeditionary Force,



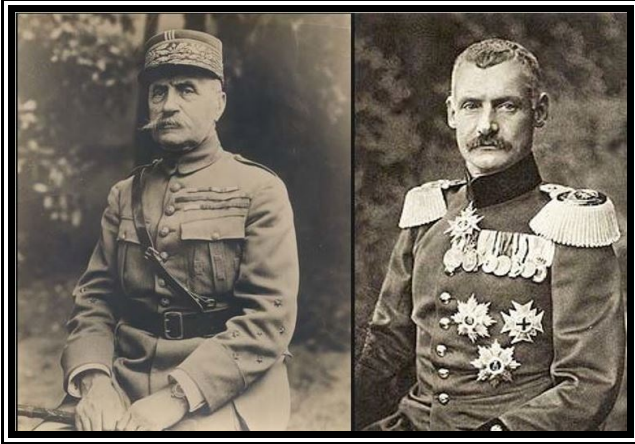
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Le 18 octobre, 1918 [Jour 25]

Que Pensent-ils de l'Autre Côté ?



Les perspectives de Foch et Rupprecht

Le même jour que le **Maréchal Ferdinand Foch** livre ses recommandations détaillées pour les conditions d'armistice au Chef du Conseil des ministres français, Georges Clemenceau, l'Héritier de la Couronne de Bavière, **le Prince Rupprecht**, commandant de groupe d'armées, écrit au Chancelier d'Allemagne au sujet des conditions sur le terrain.

C'est en effet le **18 octobre 1918** que Foch recommande à Clemenceau d'adopter une ligne dure envers les Allemands pour assurer que leur armée ne soit absolument pas capable de poser un risque après une entente d'armistice. Il est complètement opposé à

donner aux puissances centrales quelque chance que ce soit de se réorganiser rapidement.

De son côté le Prince Rupprecht informe le gouvernement que les conditions en campagne sont horribles et que rien ne peut être espéré de l'Armée, si une pause n'est pas obtenue pour se regrouper. Il rapporte jusqu'à quel point le moral des soldats est miné et combien leur endurance est usée. «Ils se rendent en hordes», dit-il, «et nous n'avons plus aucune ligne de défense préparée.»

Cette comparaison des perspectives démontre que Foch a raison: il ne faut laisser aucun temps à l'ennemi de se regrouper.

— Pourtant, du côté anglais, Lloyd George et Haig croient au même moment qu'il pourrait y avoir ralentissement temporaire et diminution des exigences d'armistice.

●Terraine, *To Win a War*, p. 206-7; ●Palat, *La Part de Foch dans la Victoire*, p. 227.



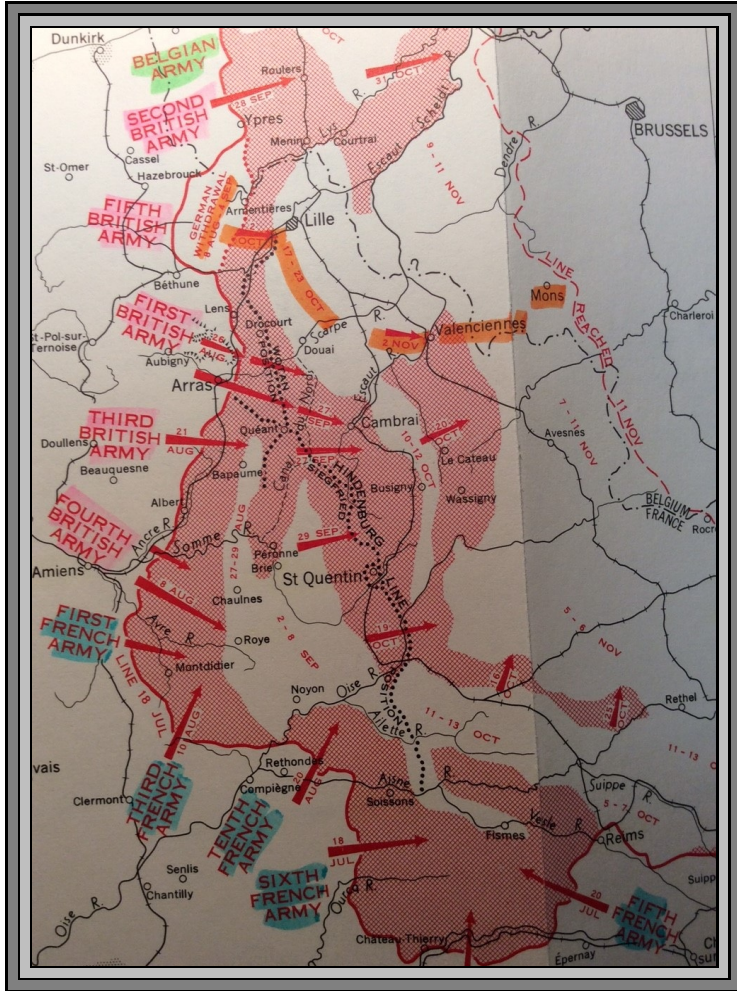
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October 19, 1918 [Day 24]

A Race to Exhaustion



Drumming them forward

On 19 October 1918, Maréchal Foch issues new orders to all army groups in France. They are to proceed forward again in coordinated mutual support, with a clean objective for each so as to pursue the retreating army and prevent that it continue to ruin all areas that it leaves by systematic destruction.

What Foch wants to avoid is that the German army find a way to escape final defeat before winter, and regain strength for 1919.

His admonitions to all Commanders-in-chief and army group commanders is therefore to not stop at any price, to pursue with all the vigor that they can possibly muster out of their exhausted troops, and drive on, and on, and on, as if by the beat of a drum.

In the north, Ostend and Zbrugge are now in allied hands. Despite the chaos left by the leaving Germans, they can be used as ports to support the armies. Bruxelles is the objective there.

Elsewhere the British, French and American army groups are to push further, harder, and faster, to capture more prisoners, more villages, more materiel of war.

—This is a race to exhaustion: Theirs or Ours!

•Palat, *La part de Foch dans la Victoire*, p. 217-8; •Hunter, *Foch*, p. 206.



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Le 20 octobre, 1918 [Jour 23] Assassinat Industriel en France



La libération de Denain par les Canadiens

Le 20 octobre 1918, la ville de Denain est abandonnée par les Allemands, sans laisser de vivres aux habitants et après avoir détruit tout ce qui pouvait s'y trouver pour aider les alliés. Il s'agit de ce que le Président de la république française Raymond Poincaré appellera l'«assassinat industriel» de la France.

Le reporter canadien Fred James a décrit l'événement en ces termes:

“Aussitôt que l'occupation de Denain a été complétée, un officier canadien-français bien connu y a été envoyé pour agir comme

Commandant de Ville. Plus tôt au cours de la guerre cet officier avait reçu la Légion d'Honneur des autorités françaises pour vaillance en campagne, et lorsque les citoyens ont aperçu le ruban de cette décoration sur sa tunique et ont réalisé qu'il était un Canadien-français, il a été reçu et fêté d'une manière qui n'aurait pas pu être plus marquée ou sincère pour un Président de la République française ou pour un Roi de l'Empire britannique. Les hommes lui ont serré la main jusqu'à ce que son bras en souffre, et les femmes l'ont embrassé de la façon la plus libérale et osée. Son mot est devenu la loi et ses instructions étaient obéies avec un consentement joyeux.”

— La photo relate l'événement d'une action de Grâce, le 27 octobre, dans Denain.

•Fred James, Canada's Triumph, p. 62. •Photo CWM: Control no.: 19930012-924



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October 21st, 1918 [Day 22]

The Admirals' Last Knee Jerk



Last Gasp of the German High Seas Fleet

Responding to President Wilson's preconditions for mediating an armistice, the German government, on **21 October 1918**, orders the U-boats home, over the objections of **Admiral Reinhard Scheer**, the Chief of the Admiralty.

Scheer is determined to continue the fight and orders an all-out attack on the British fleet. Admiral Hipper, the Commander of the Fleet, will issue the appropriate order on October 24th.

The plan is for a raid along the Flanders coast and Thames estuary aiming to draw the British fleet, largely based in east Scotland, into a climactic fleet action.

The High Seas Fleet will assemble on October 29th, but sailors, fearing that Scheer and Hipper are sacrificing them to sabotage armistice negotiations, will create

insubordination and mutinous disturbances.

On October 30th, Hipper, fearing revolution, will cancel the operation, but the spark for the Kiel Mutiny will have been ignited.

— It will finally blow up in two weeks from now.

●Arthur Marder, From the Dreadnought to Scapa Flow, The Royal Navy in the Fisher Era, 1904–1919: Vol. 5: Victory and Aftermath



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October 22nd, 1918 [Day 21]

A Final Gallop in the Sand



9th Hodson's Horse, 5th Cavalry Division, British Indian Army

End-Game at Aleppo

After the capture of Damascus, General Allenby continued his pursuit northwards of the retreating Turkish army.

General Liman von Sanders hoped to establish a firm line at Aleppo but the pressure of Allenby's cavalry rendered this impossible.

Major-General H.J. MacAndrew, commanding the 5th Indian Army cavalry division, reinforced with armoured cars, took Baalbek and Homs.

However, intelligence reports then caused Allenby to hold MacAndrew back. The Cavalry Commander argued in a series of telegrams to Allenby, that opposition was fading and the road lay open to Aleppo.

Allenby relented and on **22 October 1918**, MacAndrew arrived before the city which fell

some days later, the last city in Syria to be captured.

MacAndrew's leadership of the 5th Division in the final drive to Aleppo is considered one of the last great cavalry actions.

— A rousing finish for one of the most successful cavalry campaigns in history.

Further information: ●Anthony Bruce, [The Last Crusade: The Palestine Campaign in the First World War](#)



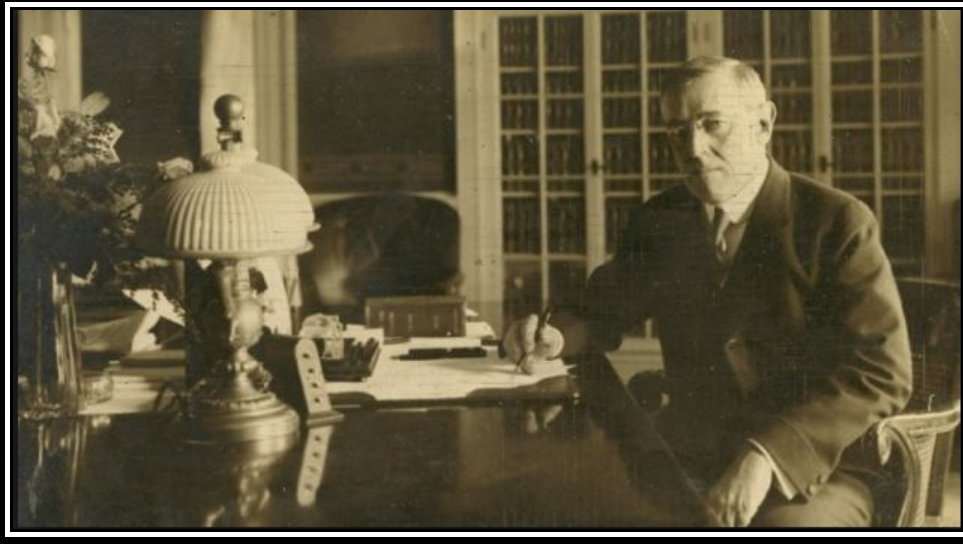
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October 23rd, 1918 [Day 20]

The Big S-Word



Wilson Rejects German Request for an Armistice

As Germany's military position deteriorated, General Erich Ludendorff demanded at a meeting of the Crown Council that Germany seek an armistice on the basis of **President Wilson's** Fourteen Points.

At first, the new Chancellor, Prince Maximilian von Baden, wanted to fight on but the army Chief of Staff, General Paul von Hindenburg reiterated Ludendorff's request.

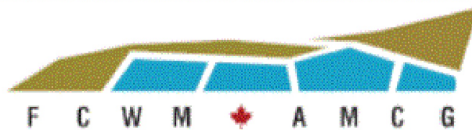
The Chancellor then sent a message to Wilson on 4 October requesting an armistice.

Wilson set preconditions: cessation of submarine activity; withdrawal from occupied territories; abdication of the Kaiser. However, in the course of two exchanges of notes, it was clear that the German governing and military classes could not yet accept abdication.

Wilson, uncertain that he could trust von Baden (cousin of the Kaiser), responded on the **23 October 1918** that:

— «if the government of the United States must deal with military masters and monarchical autocrats of Germany...it [the USA] must demand not peace negotiations but surrender.»

Further information: •Bullitt Lowry, [Armistice 1918](#) (Kent State University Press).



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Le 24 octobre, 1918 [Day 19]

Monte Grappo et Vittorio Veneto



Suicide d'un Empire

Le peu de cohésion politique qui demeurait dans l'Empire austro-hongrois s'est complètement désagrégé après la défaite récente de la Bulgarie et les promesses du Président Wilson, dans ses 14-Points, de donner leur indépendance aux nationalités minoritaires.

Hongrois, Tchèques, Slaves, Roumains, ont obtenu la fédération des états sous les Habsburg, le 16 octobre, et seule l'Armée maintient dorénavant une union superficielle, sur le point de

casser.

Le 23 octobre, l'Armée Austro-Hongroises en Italie se lance dans une offensive mal préparée et sans élan, qui marque sa fin, à **Monte Grappo**.

Le 24 octobre 1918, la riposte italienne, considérablement aidée par des éléments alliés, renverse le mouvement, traverse les fleuves qui protègent encore les Autrichiens, et saisit leur Grand Quartier Général à **Vittorio Veneto**.

La prochaine semaine marquera la débandade terminale des Autrichiens en Italie, aidée par la confusion politique irrémédiable de Vienne.

– Ainsi meurt l'empire des Habsburg, sans révolution, sans sympathie.

●Cruttwell, A History of the Great War (2nd Ed.), Chap 38; ●Dupuy & Dupuy, Encyclopedia of Military History. ●<http://boowiki.info/art/batailles-du-front-italien/bataille-de-vittorio-veneto.html> ●Pour en savoir plus : <https://www.medailles1914-1918.fr/italie-ordrevitt.html>; ●Photo: Drapeau de l'Empire austro-hongrois. (Wikipedia)



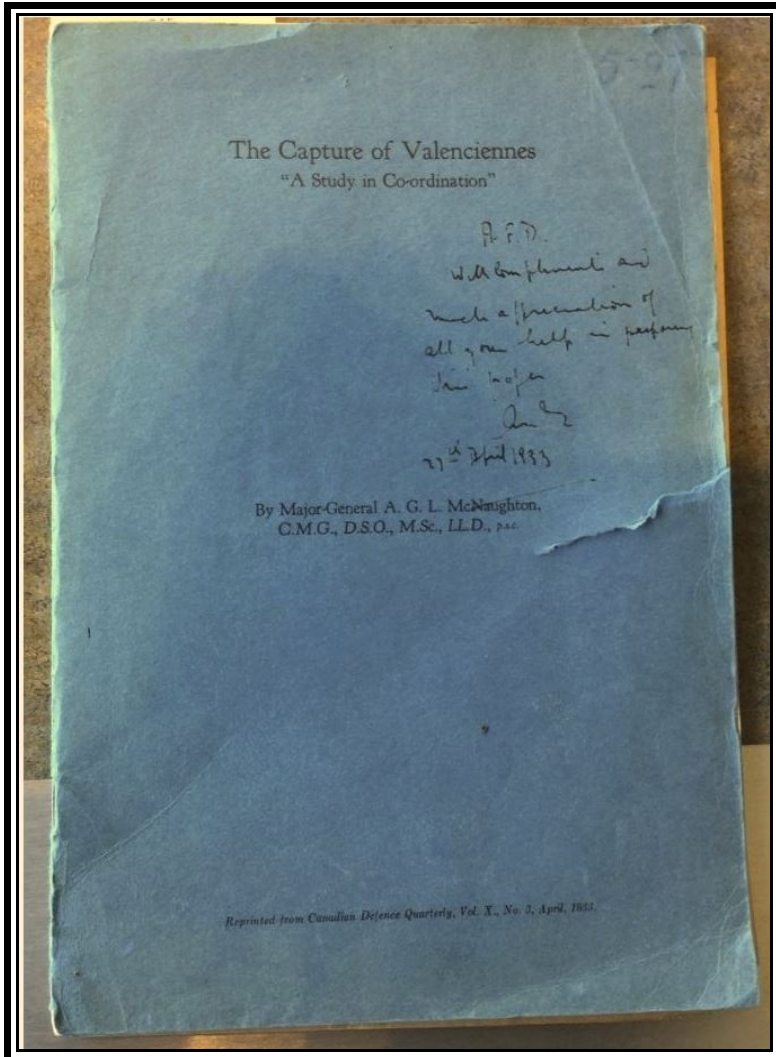
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Le 25 octobre, 1918 [Jour 18]

Coordination Interarmes



L'attaque du Mont Houy et de Valenciennes

Le Corps canadien a maintenant progressé jusqu'au Canal de l'Escaut, à l'ouest de Valenciennes. Encore une fois, un canal sert d'obstacle pour l'ennemi en défense et se présente comme un défi pour l'état-major de la Première Armée.

Mais cette fois encore, le lieutenant général Currie mène les opérations de main de maître et prépare un plan d'artillerie qu'il qualifiera lui-même d'unique par le volume de feu qui sera déployé pour permettre à une seule brigade de progresser sous la protection d'un rideau de feu et d'un plan de contre-bombardement qui neutralise l'artillerie ennemie.

La prise préliminaire du Mont Houy, qui offre un point d'observation élevé au sud de la ville de Valenciennes, donnera en première phase un avantage tactique important.

L'opération complète, qui se déroulera dans la prochaine semaine, fera l'objet d'une étude d'école¹.

●Major General A.G.L. McNaughton, «The Capture of Valenciennes: A Study of Coordination», Canadian Defence Quarterly, Vol. X, No. 3, April 1955.



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Le 26 octobre, 1918 [Jour 17]

«Les civils ne veulent plus se battre»



Exit Ludendorff

Le général Erich von Ludendorff sombre, au début du mois de septembre, dans une dépression telle que ses collaborateurs le font discrètement examiner par un neurologue.

Le ministre de la Guerre, découvrant son état de santé au cours de sa visite à Spa, le 9 septembre, n'en demeure pas moins inquiet. Ayant une explication particulièrement franche avec celui-ci, il parvient à lui faire accepter d'être déchargé en partie de ses tâches par un adjoint, le colonel Heye.

Heye met quelques jours à évaluer la situation et à en tirer deux conclusions : compte tenu de sa supériorité numérique, Foch peut percer le front allemand; au rythme de ses pertes, l'armée allemande est menacée de mort par consommation.

Dès lors, il met tout en œuvre pour tenter d'obtenir de Ludendorff qu'il demande un armistice.

Le 23 octobre, Ludendorff dénonce les compromis faits par le gouvernement qui vont « au-delà des limites des concessions acceptables d'un point de vue militaire » et joue clairement avec l'idée d'une rupture de la négociation et du combat à outrance.

Max de Bade exige alors le limogeage du général qui part la tête haute, **le 26 octobre 1918.**
— Il s'en va parce que les civils ne veulent plus se battre!

• Sources : <https://journals.openedition.org/rha/293> • Pour en savoir plus : <https://journals.openedition.org/rha/293>
• Image: <https://www.deviantart.com/arminius1871/art/Erich-Ludendorff-712799401>



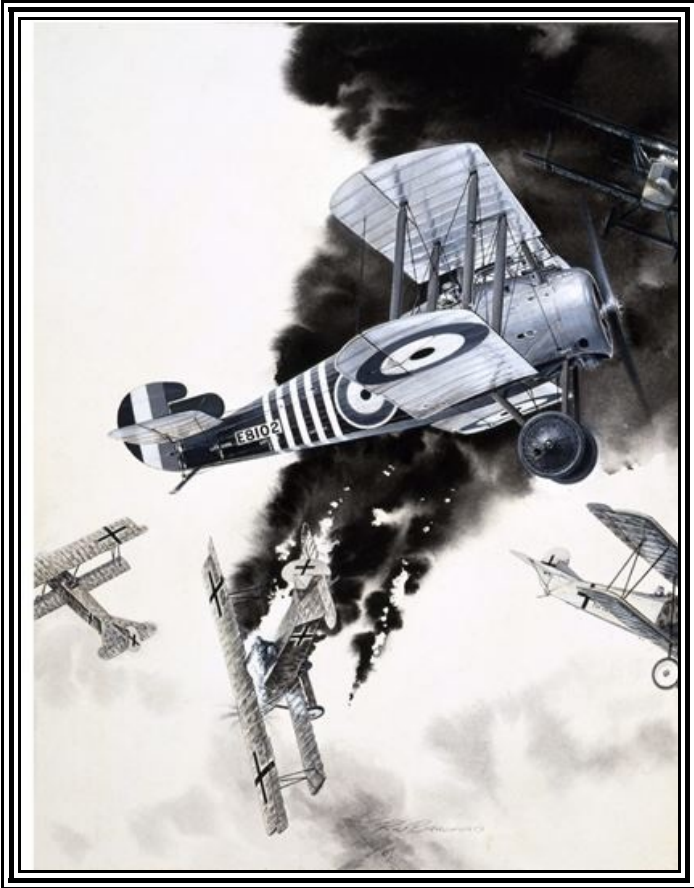
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October 27, 1918 [Day 16]

One Last Patrol



Barker's Victoria Cross

In September 1918, **Captain William Barker** was commanding officer of 139 squadron RAF in Italy. He had flown twice as many combat hours as most pilots and was by now exhausted, so he was posted to England.

He persuaded RAF headquarters to allow him a roving commission to "assess air fighting on the Western Front."

Allowed to pick any aircraft from the depot, he selected a new type, the Sopwith Snipe, serial number E8102 and joined 201 squadron in France.

On 27 October 1918, Barker was under orders to return to London but decided to fly one last patrol. He pursued and shot down a German reconnaissance aircraft but became fixated on the target and was taken by surprise by a number of Fokker D.VIIs (the best German scout).

In an intense fight, witnessed by hundreds on the ground, he shot down at least three Fokkers, before crash landing.

— Although he won the Victoria Cross for this action, Barker recognised that his own tactical error had led to a fight which he survived only

because of his extraordinary skill in aerial close combat.

Further information: ●Wayne Ralph, Barker VC. ●Painting Robert W. Bradford, Sopwith Snipe-E8102, Canadian War Museum, Object No. 19710197-001.



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October 28, 1918 [Day 15]

«I Told You So!»



David Lloyd George's triumph

On 28 October 1918, the Prime minister of Great Britain is going to Paris for an allied conference. His secretary, Maurice Hankey, will be there to witness «the climax of the triumph of Lloyd George's theories.»

Since the beginning of the war, **Lloyd George** has been the leading proponent of the «side shows», in opposition to the «Westerners», who always saw France as being the only decisive front on which the war could be won or lost.

Field Marshal Haig was always the chief Westerner, carrying with him the Conservative and military establishments.

As a Liberal, even when he was a Prime Minister, LG never had the support to overpower the Westerners in strategic decisions when he advocated «knocking the props» of the Central powers by attacking their weak points more to the east

(Dardanelles, Egypt, Mesopotamia, Greece, Italy).

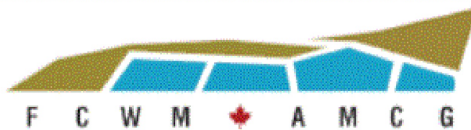
But in the Paris conference, LG will be vindicated. Maréchal Foch will present to the delegates a summary of the military situation that will show that the sideshows are in fact bringing war to the end.

The recent victories in the Balkans (Salonica), Palestine, and now Italy, have opened a gap which the Germans cannot defend: their soft belly of Bavaria.

With the props knocked down under them, no success in France can ever save the Germans.

— And now, don't ask David Lloyd George not to say «I told you so!»

•Hankey, Supreme Command, II: 851-2.



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Le 29 octobre, 1918 [Jour 14]

Les Slaves du Sud abandonnent l'Autriche



Les «Yugo» se regroupent: Les Tchèques, Slovènes et Croates proclament leur indépendance.

Avant même le début du conflit, l'Autriche-Hongrie est en proie à des contradictions internes: elle doit à la fois «satisfaire» les Tchèques sans décevoir les Hongrois, contenir les Slaves du sud ('Yugo') sans mécontenter la Russie, et maintenir la triple alliance sans laisser l'Italie prendre l'initiative en Adriatique.

Le lien créé par la dynastie des Habsbourg entre ces peuples est toutefois artificiel et surmonte difficilement les disparités géographiques, religieuses et politiques.

Au cours du conflit, l'armée autrichienne mobilise au total presque neuf millions d'hommes. Les mutineries ont lieu surtout vers le printemps 1918, à cause de la famine. Cependant, fin octobre 1918, les nationalités composant une partie de l'empire, Tchèques, Slovènes, Croates, Hongrois, proclament leur indépendance. L'armée, noyau de cohésion, se délite.

Après les traités de paix, l'Autriche se trouvera réduite à sa partie germanique et deviendra une république. La Première République Autrichienne s'avérera un état inorganisé et gravement appauvri de sept millions d'habitants.

Sources : <http://dip01.u-grenoble3.fr/wordpress/l2gr13weihoff/histoire-de-vienne-de-1918-a-1945/>

Pour en savoir plus : <http://croatia.eu/article.php?lang=4&id=22>



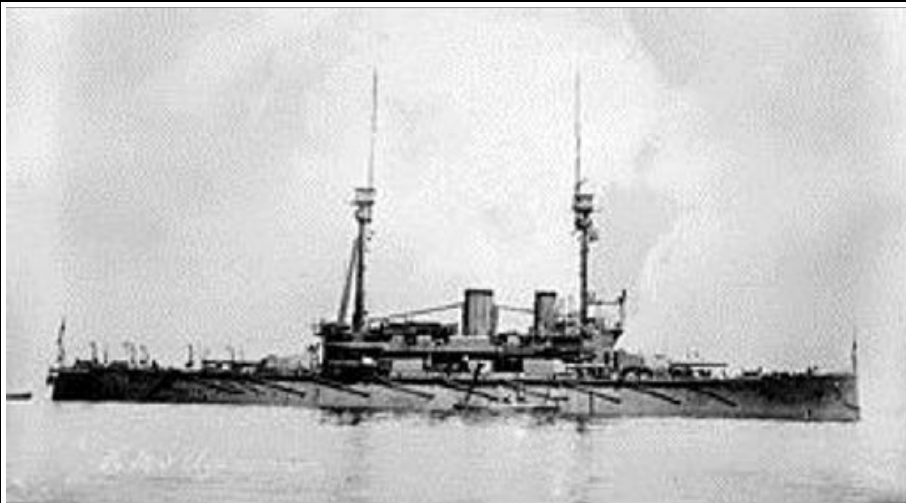
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October 30, 1918 [Day 13]

Agamemnon There at the End



HMS Agamemnon (Last class of Royal Navy pre-Dreadnought battleships)

Armistice of Moudros

The Allied Commander in the Mediterranean received a Turkish delegation, headed by the Minister of Marine, at the port of Moudros, on the island of Lemnos, on 26 October.

After four days of discussions on the battleship HMS *Agamemnon* (a veteran of the Gallipoli campaign) an Armistice is signed on **30 October 1918**.

The terms include opening of the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus to the Allies, surrender of the navy, disbandment of the army, withdrawal of German troops, and

release of prisoners and Armenian detainees.

The Ottoman Empire will face much harsher terms at the peace conference.

But, surprisingly, the Ottoman Empire has endured; its soldiers have inflicted shattering defeats on the Allies at Gallipoli, in Mesopotamia and in Gaza.

— Although defeated in Palestine, the army gave a good account of itself, but in General Allenby, they faced one of the best Allied commanders.

Further information: ●Eugene Rogan, [The Fall of the Ottomans: The Great War in the Middle East](#)



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October 31, 1918 [Day 12]

Twins No More!



Flag of the short-lived Hungarian People's Republic, used between 1918–1919 under the rule of Károlyi. (Wikipedia)

Hungary Dissolves the Dual Monarchy

The Austro-Hungarian Empire has existed as a dual monarchy since the Compromise of 1867, when Hungary's co-equal status within the empire was recognised to sustain Austria as a great power after its defeat by Prussia.

However, nationalist movements have roiled the Empire for decades and were stimulated by the Entente's declaration of war aims in January 1917, promising autonomy for national groups in the Empire.

When Austria sought armistice negotiations on the basis of the Fourteen Points, i.e., national autonomy, US Secretary of State Lansing responded that the Allies were now committed to the national independence of the Czechs, Slovaks and South Slavs, who all established provisional governments in the last week of October.

In Hungary, an ardent nationalist, Count Mihaly Karolyi, seized power.

— On the **31 October 1918**, Emperor Charles was forced to accept him as prime minister. One of Karolyi's first acts was to cancel the Compromise of 1867, ending the Dual Austrian-Hungarian Monarchy.

Further information: ●Pieter Judson, [The Hapsburg Empire: A New History](#)



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