

# 1918 Armistice Failed To Halt Wars

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immediately followed World War I were of little importance. They did little more than straighten out a few loose ends left by the big one.

In the 1930s, however, one could sense a change. The loose ends had been cleaned up. The lines now were being drawn for what was to be World War II.

Japan invaded China in 1931 and the fighting was incorporated into the greater World War II. It didn't end until 1945.

Italy conquered Ethiopia and the East African war all but destroyed the League of Nations. The league, once a bright hope for international peace, declared sanctions against Italy and failed to make them stick.

Civil war broke out in Spain and other nations used the Spanish battlefields as a testing ground for their armies. Russian troops fought with the Loyalists and Germans and Italians with the Rebels.

Flush with victory in Ethiopia and Spain, Italy overran Albania. In a three-month winter war, Russia vanquished little Finland. Both were wars of maneuver for position in a bigger conflict to come.

No one in a world grown wary of panaceas made the prediction,

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"This," they said as they fought the Kaiser, "is the war to end all wars."

It turned out to be the worst forecast of the 20th century.

World War I—the war to end all wars — came to starry-eyed official close 40 years ago next Tuesday.

To look back over four decades to those hopeful days is to wonder whether World War I ever really ended at all.

The day the armistice was signed in the railway car in Compiègne, armistice was farthest from the minds of the rival factions in one of the century's greatest, forgotten conflicts, the Russian Civil War.

For nearly a year, Russian armies identified only as "Red" and "White" had been marching and countermarching, fighting and killing, the length and breadth of that huge, confused land. They kept right on fighting; and some war-weary Allied armies—British, French, American—joined the conflict. Names like Wrangel, Kolchak, Denikin, Trotsky became familiar around the world. The war ended in exhaustion with the Red armies of the

Bolsheviks victorious.

At the same time, the Bolshevik forces were engaged in warfare against six neighboring nations, five of them creations of the chaos that followed the collapse of Imperial Russia. The battlegrounds were Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Finland, Poland and Rumania!

But post-World War I fighting wasn't confined to Europe.

Greece invaded its ancient foe, Turkey, and it was two years before the Greeks were driven from the Anatolian peninsula.

The Arabian peninsula erupted in civil war with the house of Ibn Saud arrayed against the Hashemites. The fighting lasted seven years and wound up with

Saud in command of a united Arabia.

The amir of Afghanistan chose the year 1919 to declare war on the British in India. He called the whole thing off when he found he had underestimated the opposition quite badly.

In the mid-1920s, Poland fought Lithuania over a place called Vilna and Greece invaded Bulgaria in the climax of a long series of frontier incidents.

### Little and Big Wars

Minor wars of the 1930s pitted the South American nations of Paraguay and Bolivia against each other over a territory called the Chaco and Saudi Arabia tested its strength against Yemen. On the whole, the wars that