

WW1-VERSAILLES PEACE TREATY: ROLE OF DIPLOMATIC & MILITARY MAIL

INTRODUCTION

This exhibit shows the role of diplomatic and military mail between the US government officials and their counter-part Allied nations and how the US got engaged in World War I, defeat of Central Powers leading to the Armistice Treaty and the negotiation of the Versailles Peace Treaty and how the US and Britain laid the formation of League of Nations. Some of the letters contained in the envelopes shown here bring out the personal diplomacy conducted primarily between the US and Allied diplomats and Col. Edward M. House, the special advisor to President Wilson who de facto lead the US delegation at the Versailles Peace conference. Exhibit also shows the lesser known event, "Inter-Allied Games" held in Paris organized by the US Army and the American YMCA in Paris while the Peace conference was held. Signing of Versailles treaty on 28 June 1918 is reflected by the mail and souvenir card mailed on that day from the Versailles Congress post office. Finally exhibit shows post Peace conference, the formation of the League of Nations whose first Secretary General was Si Eric Drummond in 1920.

Background: This exhibit is primarily based on extensive correspondence Col. House and participants in the Peace Conference held in 1918-1919. . Since he had the direct access to President Wilson, most leaders of Allied nations extensively dealt with him which resulted in large correspondence. The story presented here is based on some of the original envelopes addressed to Col. House along with some of the original letters in these envelopes which are archived at the Yale University Library. This presentation could not have been possible Col. House made pencil notation of the date and name of the letter writer on each envelope. Both the librarians at Yale and a private researcher are credited in locating the correspondence containing in a number of the envelopes presented here.



Col. House Behind Pres. Wilson at Versailles Treaty

ORGANIZATION

Section I: Mail delivery methods

Section II: Pre-Armistice Treaty

Section III: Armistice to Versailles Peace Treaty

Section IV: Post Versailles Peace Treaty to League of Nations

KEYS WITHIN THE EXHIBIT

Letter Sources: Yale Library Archive of Col. House Papers (YALE)

Items of exceptional importance are framed within a red box.

Supporting reference is available using a phone to scan the QR codes within in the exhibit.