**1 January 1917** Alois Hába (23) begins three months at the Non-Commissioned Officers’ School in St. Pölten, Austria.

*Two Poems* for orchestra by Frank Bridge (37) is performed for the first time, in Queen’s Hall, London, the composer conducting.

*Hearts of Erin*, a comic opera by Victor Herbert (57) to words of Blossom, is performed for the first time, in the Colonial Theatre, Cleveland, conducted by the composer. The name will be changed to *Eileen*. See 19 March 1917.

**2 January** **1917** Silvestre Revueltas (17) is confirmed as first violin in the Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional in Mexico City, directed by Jesús M. Acuña.

**4 January 1917** The Russian battleship *Peresvet* strikes a German mine and goes down north of Port Said. 167 men are lost.

**5 January 1917** Maurice Ravel’s (41) mother, Marie Delouart Ravel, dies at the age of 76. From here to the end of his life, his musical output is seriously reduced.

Settings of Four Slovak Folk Songs for chorus and piano, by Béla Bartók (35), are performed for the first time, in Budapest.

**7 January 1917** Ulysses Simpson Kay, Jr. is born in Tucson, Arizona, USA the son of Ulysses Simpson Kay, Sr., a barber, former cowboy and jockey, and Elizabeth Davis, an amateur pianist and a niece of King Oliver.

**9 January 1917** Prince Nikolay Dmitrievich Golitsyn replaces Alyeksandr Fyodorovich Trepov as Prime Minister of Russia.

British troops take Rafah, near Gaza, but withdraw, fearing a Turkish counterattack.

A day long battle in Mesopotamia leaves the British 900 meters beyond their original position.

**10 January 1917** The Allied powers respond to President Wilson’s request for war aims with a list of non-negotiable items.

**11 January 1917** A massive explosion occurs at a foundry in Lyndhurst, New Jersey making artillery shells for Great Britain and Russia. 500,000 high explosive shells go off over the course of four hours. German saboteurs are suspected. There is no loss of life because of the quick thinking and courage of switchboard operator Theresa McNamara who alerted each of the buildings involved.

**13 January 1917** An overloaded train carrying Russian wounded and Romanian refugees loses control on a downhill slope and crashes into a second train at Ciurea, Romania. Somewhere between 600 and 1,000 people are killed by the impact and subsequent fire.

**14 January 1917** A fire explodes the magazine of the Japanese cruiser *Tsukuba* while it is anchored at the port of Yokosuka. 305 men are killed.

**15 January 1917** Henry Cowell (19) leaves the Institute of Musical Arts in New York, where he had enrolled two months ago. He is unhappy with the quality of instruction and earned the ire of the director, Frank Damrosch.

Roger Sessions (20) begins matriculating at Yale University for a Bachelor of Music degree.

**16 January 1917** A telegram is sent from German Foreign Minister Arthur Zimmermann to his minister in Mexico City, Heinrich von Eckhardt. Zimmermann believes that a war between Mexico and the United States would prevent American involvement in the European war. If the United States should enter the war, Eckhardt is told to offer President Venustiano Carranza joint conduct of the war and the peace. He further offers financial support and territory lost by Mexico to the United States in 1848 and 1853 as part of a post-war treaty. That territory would include California, New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada, Utah, and Colorado.

**17 January 1917** Denmark and the United States exchange ratifications of the Virgin Islands sale treaty.

**18 January 1917** The students of Yale University vote 1,102-286 in favor of compulsory military training. Student Roger Sessions (20) votes with the minority.

**19 January 1917** Turkish troops withdraw across the Tigris.

A document is drawn up in Brünn (Brno) entitled “Minutes of the negotiations between Mr. Leos Janácek, musical composer in Brno, and Mrs. Zdenka Janácková, née Schulzová, wife of the same, in the presence of their representatives, Dr. Felix Rudis and Dr. Ludvík Hanf, solicitors in Brno.” (Tyrrell II, 142) Not exactly a divorce, it clears up the ambiguous relationship between the two.

**20 January 1917** An earthquake strikes the Kangean Islands, Dutch East Indies (Indonesia) killing 1,500 people.

80 people are killed when an arms factory explodes in London.

Sergey Rakhmaninov (43) conducts in Russia for the last time, at the Bolshoy Theatre, Moscow.

**21 January 1917** While attending Non-Commissioned Officers’ School in St. Pölten, Austria, Alois Hába (23) witnesses a performance of the quarter-tone opera *Die Schneider von Schönau* of Jan Brandts-Buys. Hába will write to the composer asking for lessons.

*Elegia Eroica* for orchestra by Alfredo Casella (33) is performed for the first time, in Rome. The work is intended to honor the members of the allied forces. The audience is extremely hostile and drowns out the last movement. The press is scathing, one critic suggesting that the composer be deported.

**22 January 1917** 300,000 workers strike in Petrograd to commemorate Bloody Sunday, 1905.

US President Wilson again calls for a League of Nations to safeguard future peace.

The US Supreme Court rules in the case of *Herbert v. Shanley Co.* that composers shall be compensated for public performance of their works, even if there was no direct admission charge. They require that Shanley’s Restaurant in New York pay Victor Herbert (57) for performing one of his songs at a dinner.

**23 January 1917** German forces begin a new offensive towards Riga. They encounter fierce Russian resistance.

**25 January 1917** A British attack on the Turkish salient at Hai meets initial success but is beaten back by a Turkish counterattack.

Arab forces under Feisal and Lawrence, supported by British ships, take Al Wajh (Saudi Arabia).

The converted ocean liner *SS Laurentic* strikes two mines off Lough Swilly, Ireland and goes down with 354 of those aboard. 121 are rescued.

**26 January 1917** Indian troops retake the losses of yesterday at Hai.

The icebreaking munitions ship *Cheliuskin* explodes at the port of Ekonomiya, near Arkhangelsk, Russia. The entire wharf area is set ablaze. This ignites the Hudson’s Bay Company ship *Bayropea* which also explodes. Later, 300 tons of TNT on the wharf explodes. Estimates of the dead range from 70 to 300 but the true number is probably over 1,000.

*Ave Atque Vale* for orchestra by Frederick S. Converse (46) is performed for the first time, in St. Louis.

**27 January 1917** Troops of the American punitive expedition into Mexico begin to withdraw to Texas.

The Original Dixieland Jass Band opens at Reisenweber’s Restaurant at 58th Street and 8th Avenue, New York.

*Poème* for cello and piano by Charles Martin Loeffler (55) is performed for the first time, in Aeolian Hall, New York.

**28 January 1917** The French troopship *Amiral Magon* is torpedoed and sunk by a German submarine halfway between Crete and Sicily. 203 of those aboard are lost.

**30 January 1917** The Polish Council of State adopts a constitution.

**31 January 1917** A new constitution for Mexico is finally finished by the convention working on it in Querétaro.

**1 February 1917** Germany announces the policy of unrestricted submarine warfare against shipping of all flags around the allied nations.

Paul Claudel arrives in Rio de Janeiro as the minister of France to Brazil. He has brought with him Darius Milhaud (24). Milhaud will remain two years in Brazil and become good friends with Heitor Villa-Lobos (29).

**2 February 1917** Bread cards are instituted in the United Kingdom.

**3 February 1917** British and colonial troops rout the Turks from their trenches at Hai. The Turks redeploy at the confluence of the Hai and Tigris rivers.

The German offensive towards Riga halts after minimal gains and heavy casualties.

In response to Germany’s policy of unrestricted submarine warfare, the United States breaks diplomatic relations. It will soon be followed by Brazil, Bolivia, Peru, and other South American nations.

In the Bay of Biscay, the German U-boat *U-53* orders the crew of the US liner *Housatonic*, presently carrying a cargo of wheat, into lifeboats and then sinks her. All survive.

Because of the actions of the American government today, Otto Luening (16) is expelled from the Royal Academy of Music in Munich before the assembled student body. They give him polite applause as he leaves.

Several works by Heitor Villa-Lobos (29) are performed for the first time, in the Salão Nobre do Jornal do Comércio, Rio de Janeiro: Preludio no.2 for cello and piano, *Sonata fantasia* *no.1* for violin and piano, *Elégie* for violin or cello and piano, the String Quartet no.2, *Fábulas características* for piano and five songs for voice and piano: *Noite de luar* to words of Junior, *L’oiseau blessé d’une flèche, Les Mères* to words of Hugo, *Il bove* to words of Carducci and *Il nome di Maria* to words of Stechetti.

**4 February 1917** Mehmed Talat Pasha replaces Said Halim Pasha as Grand Vizier of the Ottoman Empire.

The US Congress overrides President Wilson’s veto of the Immigration Act. Among other things, it bars immigration from a large swath of Asia and the Pacific Islands.

**5 February 1917** Leos Janácek’s (62) cantata *The Eternal Gospel*, to words of Vrchlicky, is performed for the first time, in Prague.

President Carranza of Mexico announces the new “Constitution of Querétaro” recently completed by a popularly elected constituent assembly. It will go into effect on 1 May. At the same time, the last of the American punitive expedition leaves Mexican soil.

**6 February 1917** *Elegie* for cello and orchestra by Wallingford Riegger (31) is performed for the first time, in Berlin.

**8 February 1917** Incidental music to de Musset’s play *On ne badine pas avec l’amour* by Camille Saint-Saëns (81) is performed for the first time, at the Théâtre de l’Odéon, Paris.

**10 February 1917** British and colonial troops push the Turks back to the Tigris.

A meeting takes place in London between the British government and members of the International Zionist Movement about a Jewish homeland in Palestine.

*The Kairn of Koridwen*, a dance drama for eight instruments by Charles T. Griffes (32) after Schuré, is performed for the first time, in the Neighborhood Playhouse, New York the composer at the piano. It will run for 12 performances, none of which is very good. Critics are encouraging.

**12 February 1917** US forces land in Santa Clara Province, Cuba.

**13 February 1917** Margaret Gertrude Zelle (Mata Hari) is arrested in Paris as a German spy.

**15 February 1917** The Italian troops ship *SS Minas*, carrying Italian, French, and Serbian troops to Thessaloniki, is torpedoed by a German submarine. 870 men are lost, including the poet Vittorio Locchi.

**16 February 1917** Japan and Great Britain agree that Japan should receive all German concessions in China and German Pacific islands north of the equator. Britain will receive German Pacific islands south of the equator.

**17 February 1917** British and colonial troops gain control of the right bank of the Tigris between Kut and Yusifiya, but an attack on Sunnaiyat fails.

A French attack north of the Ancre River is halted by German artillery.

The French passenger ship *SS Athos*, carrying French colonial soldiers from Senegal, women and children, and Chinese workers (about 1,950 in all) is torpedoed by a German submarine east of Malta. It goes down in 15 minutes taking 754 people with her. Other ships rescue the survivors.

*Burlesque* for piano by Bohuslav Martinu (26) is performed for the first time, in Policka by the composer.

**18 February 1917** *Five Poems* for voice and piano op.27 by Sergey Prokofiev (25) to words of Akhmatova are performed for the first time, in Moscow.

Sonatine for piano op.59/4 by Charles Koechlin (49) is performed for the first time, at the home of Mme Herscher-Clément, Paris.

**19 February 1917** The revolt in Cuba is declared outlaw by the US government.

**20 February 1917** Japan and Russia agree that Japan should receive all German concessions in China.

**21 February 1917** While crossing the English Channel, the *SS Mendi* is rammed by the *SS Darro*. Over 600 South Africans, almost all Native Africans, are lost along with 30 British crew.

**22 February 1917** British and colonial troops make gains against the Turks at Sunnaiyat.

**23 February 1917** British and colonial troops gain a bridgehead on the left bank of the Tigris. Later in the day, they take Sunnaiyat.

**24 February 1917** British and colonial troops take Kut al Imara.

**25 February 1917** US President Wilson learns of the contents of the Zimmermann telegram, through British intelligence.

US troops land at Guantánamo Bay and Oriente Province, Cuba.

**26 February 1917** British and colonial troops take Nahr-al-Kalek on the Tigris.

The Original Dixieland Jass Band makes its first recordings, in New York for the Victor Talking Machine Company: *Livery Stable Blues* and *Dixie Jass Band One Step*.

**1 March 1917** Japan and France agree that Japan should receive all German concessions in China.

After release by the State Department last night, the Zimmermann telegram is printed in American morning papers. The House of Representatives votes 403-13 to authorize President Wilson’s request for armed neutrality.

**2 March 1917** A Russian offensive to aid the Allied march on Baghdad reaches Hamadan and Kangavar.

US President Wilson signs into law the Jones Act. Residents of Puerto Rico are made US citizens. They are allowed to form an elected government.

**4 March 1917** The armed neutrality bill is filibustered and defeated in the Senate.

German Foreign Minister Zimmermann publicly acknowledges that the telegram is authentic.

**5 March 1917** Virgil Thomson (20) joins a field artillery regiment of the Missouri National Guard at Independence.

US President Woodrow Wilson is inaugurated for a second term. The 65th Congress of the United States convenes in Washington. It includes Jeannette Rankin of Montana, the first female member of the House. President Wilson’s Democratic Party controls the House of Representatives while the Republicans organize the Senate.

**6 March 1917** Sonata no.2for violin and piano by John Ireland (37) is performed for the first time, in Aeolian Hall, London. It is an immediate success.

**7 March 1917** Robert Erickson is born in Marquette, Michigan, the only child of Charles A. Erickson, a carpenter, and Edith Erickson.

With the capture of José Miguel Gómez in Las Villas, the liberal rebellion in Cuba peters out.

The first jazz recording is released by the Victor Talking Machine Company. It features the Original Dixieland Jass Band playing *Dixie Jass Band One-Step* and *Livery Stable Blues*.

**8 March 1917** Protestors demanding bread and striking workers take to the streets in Petrograd. Police fire into crowds.

Two songs for voice and piano by Frank Bridge (38) are performed for the first time, at the Royal College of Music, London: *Blow, blow thou winter wind* to words of Shakespeare and *Love went a-riding* to words of ME Coleridge.

Rebel Cubans surrender Santiago to the United States.

**9 March 1917** British and colonial forces cross the Diyala River in the face of strong Turkish resistance. An attack against the Turkish defensive line from Tel Aswad to Qarara fails.

US President Woodrow Wilson orders the arming of his country’s merchant ships.

The Sonata for flute, viola, and harp by Claude Debussy (54) is performed publicly for the first time, in Salle Laurent, Paris. See 10 December 1916.

President Wilson orders American merchant vessels armed, without congressional approval.

**11 March 1917** China severs diplomatic relations with Germany.

British forces take Baghdad, ending 300 years of Turkish rule. They also occupy Kadhimain to the north.

During the afternoon in Moscow, Sergey Rakhmaninov (43) gives a recital, half the proceeds to benefit the sick and wounded of the Russian army.

*Heures séculaires et instantanées* for piano by Erik Satie (50) is performed for the first time, in Galerie Barbazzanges, Faubourg St. Honoré.

*The Fountains of Rome*, a tone poem by Ottorino Respighi (37), is performed for the first time, at the Teatro Augusteo, Rome. Also premiered is the second set of *Impressioni dal vero* for orchestra of Gian Francesco Malipiero (34).

*La Ballata di Maggio* for solo voice and ensemble, composed for Salvini’s play *Dante* by Pietro Mascagni (53), is performed for the first time in Teatro Niccolini, Florence.

A presidential election is held in Mexico. Out of over 3,000,000 potential voters, only 250,000 are cast. Official reports say 79% of them go to Venustiano Carranza.

**12 March 1917** The Russian Duma receives orders from the Tsar to disperse but instead decides to stay in session and choose a provisional government to assume power. The government is headed by Prince Georgy Yevgenyevich Lvov. Prince Nikolay Dmitrievich Golitsyn and his cabinet resign. 250 delegates organize the Petrograd Soviet of Workers Deputies in the Taurida Palace.

*Izvestia* produces its first issue in Russia.

Russian soldiers in Petrograd disobey orders and join in the popular demonstrations.

When Sergey Rakhmaninov (43) receives his fee of 1,000 rubles for the recital he gave yesterday, he gives it to benefit released political prisoners and to buy gifts for the army of “my now liberated country.”

Kammersymphonie by Franz Schreker (38) is performed for the first time, at the Vienna Academy.

Three Movements for cello and piano op.8 by Paul Hindemith (21) is performed for the first time, in the Kleiner Saalbau, Frankfurt-am-Main.

**13 March 1917** British and colonial troops reach Kasirin on the Tigris.

**14 March 1917** The Petrograd Soviet declares that the army is under its control. Troops are to elect committees which will decide questions of issuance of arms and grievances.

**15 March 1917** Tsar Nikolay II, Grand Duke of Finland, King of Poland, in Pskov, abdicates the throne in favor of his brother, Grand Duke Mikhail, who refuses it and supports the provisional government. The 300-year-old Romanov dynasty is at an end.

The Petrograd Soviet of Workers’ Deputies, hoping to gain advantage from army sentiments at the front and in the capital, renames itself the Petrograd Soviet of Workers’ and Soldiers’ Deputies.

Prince Georgy Yevgenyevich Lvov replaces Prince Nikolay Dmitrievich Golitsyn as Prime Minister of Russia.

**16 March 1917** The Russian provisional government announces its desire to convene a constituent assembly, grant civil rights, create general democratization, and provide amnesty for political prisoners.

Jean Sibelius (51) writes in his diary, “Big changes afoot in Russia. Are we to be permitted to determine our own destiny? That is the big question. A heavy weight hangs over Finland.”

German forces begin to pull back to strong defensive positions (known to the Allies as the Hindenburg Line) on a 150 km front between Arras and Soissons. They destroy the land they give up, burning villages, trees, contaminating wells, and leaving booby traps.

The new Società Nazionale di Musica gives its first concert in the Accademia Santa Cecilia in Rome. The society is organized by Alfredo Casella (33) and includes Ottorino Respighi (37) and Gian Francesco Malipiero (34). It will soon change its name to Società Italiana di Musica Moderna.

**17 March 1917** The Ukranian Rada is established by socialists in Kiev.

Australian troops occupy Bapaume in the area evacuated by the Germans while the French occupy Roye.

A public disagreement with members of his cabinet over war policy forces French Prime Minister Aristide Briand to resign. He is replaced by Alexandre Felix Joseph Ribot.

La Société Française de Musicologie is founded in Paris.

George Gershwin (18) leaves his job as a song plugger at Jerome A. Remick’s music publishing to seek a career in musical theatre, but without immediate prospects.

Mexico declares neutrality in the Great War.

*Snow* for piano by Bohuslav Martinu (26) is performed for the first time, in Policka by the composer.

**18 March 1917** British and colonial troops take Nukhta, Buhriz, and Baqubah in Mesopotamia (Iraq).

British troops occupy Péronne in the area evacuated by the Germans while the French occupy Noyon.

The *Irish Rhapsody no.5* op.147 by Charles Villiers Stanford (64) is performed for the first time, in London.

President García Menocal declares an amnesty for all those involved in the revolt, effectively ending it.

**19 March 1917** German forces complete their withdrawal behind the Hindenburg Line.

The French battleship *Danton* is struck by a torpedo from a German submarine south of Sardinia. Over 800 men are rescued by other ships, but the *Danton* takes almost 300 men to the bottom.

*Eileen*, a comic opera by Victor Herbert (58) to words of Blossom, is performed for the first time in New York, at the Shubert Theatre. See 1 January 1917.

**20 March 1917** The Provisional Government places the former Tsar and his family under house arrest at Tsarskoye Selo.

*The Sanguine Fan* op.81, a ballet by Edward Elgar (59) to a story by Lowther, is performed for the first time, at the Chelsea Palace Theatre, London.

Gideon Sundback of Hoboken, New Jersey receives a patent for a “separable fastener”, later known as the zipper. Sundback has improved on the design of his employer and father-in-law Whitcomb Judson who received the original patent in 1893. It is now mass marketable.

**21 March 1917** Three songs for voice and piano by Charles Martin Loeffler (56) are performed for the first time, in Jordan Hall, Boston: *A une femme*, to words of Verlaine, *Ton souvenir est comme un livre bien-aimé* to words of Samain, and *Boléro triste* to words of Kahn.

**22 March 1917** Lev Trotsky leaves New York for Russia.

The United States recognizes the Provisional Government of Russia.

**23 March 1917** The Russian offensive towards Mesopotamia is halted at Banen by bad weather.

Ernest Bloch’s (36) orchestral work *Trois poèmes juifs* is performed completely for the first time, in Boston, conducted by the composer. See 28 February 1914.

**24 March 1917** A Cello Sonata by Claude Debussy (54) is performed for the first time, in Paris, the composer at the keyboard.

**25 March 1917** The Russian Provisional Government declares the grain trade a monopoly controlled by the government. All grain must be sold to government agents at prices named by the government.

Sept Improvisations for organ op.150 by Camille Saint-Saëns (81) are performed for the first time, at Théâtre des nations, Marseille by the composer.

**26 March 1917** Arabs commanded personally by TE Lawrence attack the railway at Aba el Na’am.

*Elegiac Trio* for flute, viola and harp by Arnold Bax (33) is performed for the first time, in Aeolian Hall, London.

**27 March 1917** The Petrograd Soviet issues a proclamation calling on the workers of the world to end the war.

British forces attack Turks at Gaza, but are forced to fall back, at a cost of 6,500 casualties.

The Dallapiccola family (including Luigi (13)) arrive in Graz from their home in Pisino d’Istria to be interned by Austrian authorities who suspect them of Italian nationalism.

*La Rondine*, a commedia lirica by Giacomo Puccini (58) to words of Adami after Willner and Reichert, is performed for the first time, at the Monte Carlo Opéra. The composer calls it a “true success.” See 9 April 1915.

**28 March 1917** Arabs under Lawrence attack the Hejaz railway again at Mudahrij.

**29 March 1917** The Russian provisional government promises independence to Poland.

British and colonial troops attack the Turks at the Hahrwan Canal near Sindiya. It fails, but the Turks withdraw north at night.

Karl Johan Gustaf Swartz replaces Hjalmar Hammarskjöld as Prime Minister of Sweden.

**31 March 1917** The United States formally takes possession of the Virgin Islands from Denmark.

**1 April 1917** French troops occupy Vauxaillon in the area evacuated by the Germans.

12,000 Armenian deportees are killed by Turkish authorities near Deir el-Zor.

Edgard Varèse (33) makes his American conducting debut at the Hippodrome on Sixth Avenue in New York. He conducts the *Requiem* of Hector Berlioz (†48) in honor of all those who have died in the Great War. Varèse, and the concert, are a smashing success.

Scott Joplin dies of syphilis at a psychiatric hospital in New York at the age of (approximately) 49.

**2 April 1917** The Russian provisional government grants equal rights for all races and religions.

Russian and British troops meet in Mesopotamia.

Lev Trotsky is arrested in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Before a joint session of Congress, President Woodrow Wilson asks them for a Declaration of War against Germany. On the same day, Jeannette Rankin of Montana is seated as the first woman member of the US Congress. Her seating was delayed for a month while the Congress debated whether a woman could be a member.

**3 April 1917** A week after the successful premiere of *La Rondine* at the Monte Carlo Opera, Prince Albert I of Monaco awards the Order of St. Charles to Giacomo Puccini (58).

*Aglavaine et Sélisette*, an overture by Arthur Honegger (25), is performed for the first time, at the Paris Conservatoire, conducted by the composer. See 1 June 1920.

**4 April 1917** The US Senate votes in favor of a declaration of war 90-6.

**5 April 1917** German forces complete redeployment behind the Hindenburg Line.

Dmitri Shostakovich (10) and his family take part in a massive funeral procession through Petrograd for 184 victims of the February (March) Revolution. At the Field of Mars, the mourners sing the revolutionary hymn “You Fell a Victim”, a tune he will use several times in his career. In the evening, he reproduces the song at the piano.

**6 April 1917** Ottoman authorities oversee the expulsion of the entire population of Jaffa and Tel Aviv. They will not be allowed to return until after the conquest of the area by the British.

As the House of Representatives votes 373-50 in favor, the United States officially declares war on Germany. Inspired by the event, George M. Cohan composes the song *Over There*. The American army currently numbers 5,791 officers and 121,797 enlisted men.

**7 April 1917** Kaiser Wilhelm II promises universal suffrage for Prussia.

The Finnish Senate gives cautious approval to independence from the Russian provisional government.

Sergey Rakhmaninov (44) gives a charity concert at the Bolshoy Theatre performing three concertos: his own second, Tchaikovsky (†23), and Liszt (†30). The proceeds to go to army relief. It is his last performance in Moscow.

*El corregidor y la molinera*, a pantomime by Manuel de Falla (40) to words of Martínez Sierra after Alarçón, is performed for the first time, in the Teatro Eslava, Madrid conducted by Joaquín Turina (34). It is wildly popular. See 22 July 1919.

Cuba and Panama declare war on Germany.

**9 April 1917** British forces attack Germans on a 30 km front around Arras. They take the German front line along the entire attack front in under an hour. Canadian troops capture most of Vimy Ridge, north of the city, while British troops take Fampoux, Feuchy, and Neuville Vitasse.

Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov (Lenin) and about 30 followers depart Zürich for Russia from the main railroad station. As a small crowd jeers them they sing the *Internationale.* Among another group of onlookers is an American music student, Otto Luening (16).

Igor Stravinsky’s (34) orchestral arrangement of *The Song of the Volga Boatman*, composed as a replacement to the Tsarist anthem, is performed for the first time, at a Ballets Russes performance in Rome.

Roger Sessions (20) writes “I expect to be exempt (from conscription), but if I can’t get out of it, I shall probably seek work in the Medical Corps, and try with all my might to get it; and if I fail, I will simply have to take the consequences—prison or even death…I am willing to risk my life for any principle of ultimate good, but I am not willing to do what seems to me to be harm in so doing, or, if possible, to help take the lives of others who may be—and many of whom undoubtedly are—in my position.” (Olmstead, 99)

**10 April 1917** German resistance and bad weather slow the allied advance at Arras.

The British hospital ship *HMHS Salta* strikes a German mine at Le Havre. It sinks in ten minutes taking 130 people, including nine nurses, with her.

An ammunition factory in Eddystone, Pennsylvania explodes killing 133 people.

**11 April 1917** Australian troops penetrate the Hindenburg Line south of Arras but are forced back.

**12 April 1917** Canadian forces complete their capture of Vimy Ridge near Arras.

**13 April 1917** Chaconne op.32 for piano by Carl Nielsen (51) is performed for the first time, in Copenhagen.

**14 April 1917** A British attack makes gains east of Monchy, but Germans regain the ground. The main phase of the British offensive at Arras ends.

*Le drapeau belge* op.79 for reciter and orchestra by Edward Elgar (59), to words of Cammaerts, is performed for the first time, in Queen’s Hall, London.

**15 April 1917** Afonso Augusto da Costa replaces António José de Almeida as Prime Minister of Portugal.

The British troops ship *SS Arcadian*, a refitted liner, is hit by a torpedo from a German submarine 50 km off Milos in the Aegean. It goes down in less than ten minutes with 279 people. Over 1,000 aboard are rescued.

The British troopship *SS Cameronia* is torpedoed and sunk by a German submarine east of Malta. Of over 2,600 men aboard, 210 are lost.

*In Flanders Fields*, a song for voice and piano by Charles Ives (42) to words of McCrae, is performed for the first time, at a luncheon of the insurance firm of Ives and Myrick at the Waldorf-Astoria, New York.

**16 April 1917** After a ride through Germany in a train sealed by the Kaiser's government (so as not to infect German citizens), Lenin arrives in Petrograd at the Finland Station. He gives his famous speech on top of an armored car. Among the throng welcoming him is a ten-year-old boy named Dmitri Shostakovich.

French forces attack Germans along an 80 km front from Soissons to Rheims (Second Battle of the Aisne). The French make modest gains in the face of strenuous German counterattacks.

Thousands of workers strike over inefficient food distribution in Berlin, Leipzig, Magdeburg, and Kiel.

**17 April 1917** Lenin issues the April Theses, setting forth the Bolshevik agenda against the provisional government and parliamentary democracy, and in favor of workers Soviets.

British forces attack Turks in Gaza for a second time, again with no effect, at a cost of 8,400 casualties.

French troops attack the Germans at Auberive, east of Rheims but can make no headway beyond the German front line.

**18 April 1917** British and colonial forces defeat Turks at the Shatt al Adhaim between Baqubah and Samarra (Iraq).

Germans counterattack on the Aisne but to no effect.

Mohandas K. Gandhi is tried in Motihari, Bihar for causing a public disturbance (he is conducting inquiries into the case of indigo growers in the province). He is released without bail while the magistrate awaits instructions from the Lieutenant-Governor.

**19 April 1917** A second British attack on Gaza fails miserably.

French forces take Condé east of Soissons.

Manuel García Prieto, marqués de Alhucemas replaces Álvaro Figueroa y Torres Mendieta, conde de Romanones as Prime Minister of Spain.

**20 April 1917** The main offensive in the Second Battle of the Aisne is halted. The French have gained 500 meters at the cost of 130,000 casualties.

The United States and the Ottoman Empire sever diplomatic relations.

**21 April 1917** On orders from the Lieutenant-Governor, the case against Mohandas K. Gandhi is dropped.

British and colonial troops attack the Turks near Istabula, south of Samarra (Iraq), causing them to fall back.

**22 April 1917** Sonata no.3 for violin and piano by Charles Ives (42) is performed for the first time, in Carnegie Chamber Music Hall, New York.

**23 April 1917** A British attack along a 14 km front at Arras captures Gavrelle and Guémappe but advances less than five km.

The *Cantata for the Centenary of the Merchants Committee*, by Carl Nielsen (51) to words of Rørdam, is performed for the first time, the composer conducting.

**24 April 1917** British and Indian troops take Samarra, 100 km north of Baghdad.

22:00 British forces attack Bulgarians in the Lake Dojran sector. It fails.

**26 April 1917** Representatives of France, Great Britain, and Italy agree at Saint-Jean-de-Maurienne, on the French border with Italy, on what will happen in Turkey should the Ottoman Empire be dismembered after the war.

Alphons Diepenbrock (54) announces he will withdraw from the Society of Dutch Composers as of 1 January.

**27 April 1917** A fire in a coal mine in Hastings, Colorado kills 121 people.

**28 April 1917** A British attack at Arras fails, except that Canadian troops take Arleux.

**30 April 1917** British and colonial troops attack Turks in a sandstorm at Band-i-Adhaim. The Turks retreat into the Jabal Mountains. This effectively completes the British conquest of Mesopotamia.

*Lodoletta*, an opera by Pietro Mascagni (53) to words of Forzano after Ouida, is performed for the first time, at the Teatro Costanzi, Rome the composer conducting. The audience is warm, but not enthralled. Critics are lukewarm.

*At Sea* op.84/5 for chorus by Jean Sibelius (51) to words of Reuter is performed for the first time, in Helsinki.

*Preghiera alla Madonna* for solo voice and piano by Alphons Diepenbrock (54) to anonymous words, is performed for the first time, in the Concertgebouw, Amsterdam.

**1 May 1917** A large number of Hungarian workers strike and demonstrate against the war.

Venustiano Carranza is inaugurated as the first constitutionally elected president of Mexico since the death of Francisco Madero in February of 1913.

**3 May 1917** The British renew their attacks at Arras along a 25 km front from Arleux to Bullecourt. Canadians take Fresnoy and Australians achieve a salient at Bullecourt but the offensive is generally a failure.

The first of several mutinies in the French army takes place in the Second Colonial Division.

Alexandros Thrasivoulou Zaimis replaces Spyridon Pavlou Lambros as Prime Minister of Greece.

An evening devoted entirely to the music of Ernst Bloch (36) takes place in Carnegie Hall, New York. It includes the premieres of *Schelomo* for cello and orchestra, the *Israel Symphony* for two sopranos, two altos, bass, and orchestra, and three psalm settings: 22, 114, and 137. The composer conducts the symphony.

**4 May 1917** With Tel Aviv denuded of its Jewish inhabitants by Turkish authorities, Arabs enter and sack the town.

The refitted liner *SS Transylvania*, now a troop ship, is torpedoed by a German submarine off Savona, Italy. After a second torpedo hits it, the ship goes down in minutes. 412 of those aboard are lost.

**5 May 1917** A general election in Australia is won by the Nationalist Party, which wins a majority in both houses.

The Violin Sonata of Claude Debussy (54) is performed for the first time, in Paris the composer at the piano. This is Debussy’s last public performance in Paris.

**7 May 1917** British forces capture Kirkuk, 240 km north of Baghdad.

**8 May 1917** Counterattacking Germans retake Fresnoy on the Arras front.

British forces once again attempt an attack against Bulgarians near Lake Dojran. It will fail.

**9 May 1917** French, Russian, and Serbian troops launch a coordinated offensive in Macedonia, but Bulgarian and German defenders repulse them.

**11 May 1917** Guillaume Apollinaire publishes an “introduction” to Erik Satie’s (50) ballet *Parade,* to be premiered a week hence, in the Paris journal *Excelsior*. “In short, *Parade* will upset the ideas of quite a number of spectators. They will be surprised, to be sure, but in the pleasantest way, and fascinated; and they will learn how graceful modern movement can be—something they had never suspected.”

The French troop ship *Medjerda* is torpedoed by a German submarine off Cape Tortosa. 344 people are lost.

Two operas by Ferruccio Busoni (51) to his own words are performed for the first time, in the Zürich Statdttheater, conducted by the composer: *Arlecchino, oder Die Fenster*, and *Turandot*. One of the dancers in *Turandot* is Karoline Blamauer, who will soon acquire the stage name Lotte Lenja.

**12 May 1917** Italians and Austro-Hungarians battle each other along the Isonzo River for the tenth time. In a battle which lasts until 8 June, Italians make limited gains with great loss of life.

*The Wooden Prince*, a ballet by Béla Bartók (36) to a scenario by Balázs, is performed for the first time, at the Budapest Opera House. To the surprise of the composer, the ballet is a great success, owing largely to the considerable efforts of the conductor, Egisto Tango.

**13 May 1917** Three Portuguese children report that the Virgin Mary appeared to them near Fatima.

It is the first of six such sightings in the area, on the 13th of each succeeding month.

Not long after his son goes to the Boston Navy Yard to enlist, George Whitefield Chadwick (62) confides to his diary, “How can one think of music when the future holds such dreadful possibilities?” (Faucett 2012, 300)

**14 May 1917** British troops take Roeux on the Arras front.

Austrian ships destroy the nets across the Straits of Otranto sinking three Allied ships and 14 net drifters.

Some of the *Paysages et marines* op.63 for piano by Charles Koechlin (49) are performed for the first time, in Paris.

Lou Silver Harrison is born in Portland, Oregon, the first of two children born to Clarence Maindenis Harrison, who held several occupations before becoming proprietor of a tire business bought with his wife’s inheritance, and Calline Lillian Silver, daughter of a streetcar mechanic, and owner of the Silver Court Apartments, also bought with her inheritance.

**15 May 1917** Marshal Henri Philippe Pétain is named Commander-in-Chief of French forces. His tasks are to turn back an imminent German offensive and quell wholesale mutinies in the French army. He will succeed at both.

Two orchestral works by Heitor Villa-Lobos (30) are performed for the first time, the composer conducting: the symphonic poem *Naufrágio de Kleônikos* and the overture to his unperformed opera *Izaht*. See 13 December 1958.

**16 May 1917** In Petrograd, troops mutiny against pro-war ministers in the provisional government.

**17 May 1917** Russian Foreign Minister Pavel Miliukov and War Minister Alexander Guchkov resign in response to the events of yesterday.

An Italian-French attack against Bulgarians and Germans north of Monastir (Bitola, Macedonia) fails.

British forces take Bullecourt on the Arras front.

After being released by the British, Lev Trotsky reaches Petrograd.

The Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional of Mexico is suspended for a lack of funds.

**18 May 1917** Conscription is instituted in the United States. All American men aged 21-30 must register for the draft.

*Parade*, a ballet réaliste by Erik Satie (51) to a story of Cocteau and Massin, with sets and costumes designed by Pablo Picasso, is performed for the first time, at the Théâtre du Chátelet, Paris. The audience is generally appreciative, the critics are savage. In his program notes, Guillaume Apollinaire says the work is “a kind of surrealism”, the first use of the term. One writer says Satie’s music is “infinitely more stupid than ingenious, more boring than drole, more senile and antiquated than audacious and innovative.”

Sonata for violin and piano op.64 by Charles Koechlin (49) is performed for the first time, in Paris.

**19 May 1917** The Provisional Government and the Petrograd Soviet agree to a combined government, over the objections of the Bolsheviks.

**21 May 1917** Fire destroys almost 2,000 buildings across 120 hectares in Atlanta. Over 10,000 people (ten percent of the city’s population) are left homeless. Only one death is attributed to the fire.

**22 May 1917** The Allied offensive in Macedonia peters out, having achieved minimal gains and costing 14,000 casualties.

**24 May 1917** Great Britain institutes a convoy system to protect merchant ships from German submarines.

Symphonic Prelude by Roger Sessions (20) is performed for the first time, in Woolsey Hall of Yale University. During the concert, announcement is made that Sessions has won the Steinert Prize of $100.

**25 May 1917** Explosions at a munitions factory at Bolevec, Pilsen, Bohemia (Plzen, Czech Republic) kill around 300 people.

23 Gotha bombers attack Folkestone killing 95 people and injuring 195.

**26 May 1917** Tornadoes strike across central Illinois killing over 100 people and injuring 600.

**27 May 1917** Seven new works by Gustav Holst (42) are performed for the first time, at Thaxted Church: Three Festival Choruses op.36a for chorus and orchestra to words of Moultrie and C. Bax, and the Four Songs op.35 to anonymous words, for solo voice and violin. The composer conducts op.36a.

**30 May 1917** On opening day of the Austrian Parliament, Czech deputies demand the union of Czechs and Slovaks in a federated empire and Polish deputies demand a free and unified Poland.

British artillery begins a weeklong bombardment of the Messines Ridge.

The critic Jean Poueigh, after savaging *Parade*, receives a card, written in beautiful calligraphy, which says, “Sir and dear friend, You are nothing but an asshole, and an unmusical asshole at that. Erik Satie (51).” See 3 June 1917.

**31 May 1917** John Philip Sousa (62) enlists in the US Naval Reserve and is given the rank of Lieutenant. He is the first US Navy musician to receive a commission.

**1 June 1917** Protests and marches begin among French troops on the Aisne River front. They sing the *Internationale* and wave red flags. There will be about 250 incidents of this type involving 35,000 soldiers.

Maurice Ravel (42) is granted a “temporary discharge” from the French army.

*These Things Shall Be* for unison choir by Charles T. Griffes (32) to words of Symonds is performed for the first time, in the Hippodrome, New York.

**2 June 1917** After some of its vessels are sunk by German submarines, Brazil revokes its neutrality and seizes German ships in port.

**3 June 1917** 1,100 delegates from the Independent Labour Party and the Socialist Party meet in Leeds to advocate a peace settlement. Among the attenders are Ramsay MacDonald, Bertrand Russell, and Philip Snowden.

The critic Jean Poueigh receives another post card from Erik Satie (51). “You are not as dumb as I thought...Despite your bonehead air and your short-sightedness, you see things at a great distance. Erik Satie.” See 30 May 1917.

**4 June 1917** The first Pulitzer Prizes are awarded by Columbia University.

**5 June 1917** Istvan, Count Tisza resigns as Prime Minister of Hungary due to discontent over the war.

Arthur Farwell (45) marries a 25-year-old actress, Gertrude Everts Brice, daughter of a civil engineer, in the Church of the Transfiguration, New York.

Symphony no.1 “Sermons in Stone” by John Alden Carpenter (41) is performed for the first time, privately, in the Music Shed of the Litchfield County Choral Union, on the estate of Carl Stoeckel in Norfolk, Connecticut. See 19 October 1917.

**6 June 1917** Desirous of peace, sailors aboard the German warship *Prince Regent Leopold* stage a hunger strike. Similar actions follow on other German ships. On 5 September the leaders of the strike will be executed by firing squad.

Georges Auric, Louis Durey, and Arthur Honegger (25) organize an homage to Erik Satie (51) in Salle Huyghens. This is the beginning of the group of young composers organizing itself around Satie, soon to be called Nouveaux Jeunes.

**7 June 1917** 03:10 After setting off 600 tons of explosives in 19 tunnels under the German lines, British, Australians, and New Zealanders capture the Messines Ridge, southeast of Ypres. An estimated 10,000 Germans are killed by the blast. The explosion is heard in Paris and London. Citizens of Lille think it is an earthquake.

*The Warriors*, an imaginary ballet by Percy Grainger (34), is performed for the first time, in Norfolk, Connecticut, the composer conducting.

**8 June 1917** Fire breaks out in the Granite Mountain copper mine in Butte, Montana. 168 people are killed.

**9 June 1917** Percy Grainger (34), still a British subject, buys a soprano saxophone, walks to Fort Totten in Queens, New York, and enlists in the United States Army.

**10 June 1917** 05:15 An Italian offensive begins in Trentino. The Austrian line generally holds despite modest Italian advances.

Nationalist riots occur in Dublin, organized by Sinn Fein.

Newly enlisted Percy Grainger (34) is transferred to Fort Hamilton in Brooklyn and becomes a member of the 15th Band of the Coast Artillery Corps. Soon, friends who stopped communicating with him because of his precipitous removal to America in 1914, begin writing again.

**11 June 1917** France delivers an ultimatum to the Greek government, demanding that King Konstantinos abdicate the throne. Simultaneously British and French troops enter Thessalia and French forces take the Isthmus of Corinth.

Eduardo Dato y Iradier replaces Manuel García Prieto, marqués de Alhucemas as Prime Minister of Spain.

*The Fringes of the Fleet*, a stage work for four baritones and orchestra by Edward Elgar (60) to words of Kipling, is performed for the first time, in the London Coliseum, the composer conducting. The orchestra numbers only 25, mostly women and girls, the men having been called up to active service.

**12 June 1917** With Britain and France backing the rival government of Eleftherios Venizelos, King Konstantinos of Greece abdicates and is succeeded by his son Alexandros. This will bring Greece into the war on the side of the Allies. The king leaves for exile in Switzerland.

Hans Pfitzner’s (48) musical legend *Palestrina*, to his own libretto, is performed for the first time, in Munich.

Works by John Ireland (37) are performed for the first time, in Wigmore Hall, London the composer at the keyboard: Piano Trio no.2, and three songs for voice and piano, *The Cost* to words of Cooper, *The Heart’s Desire* to words of Houseman, and *The Soldier* to words of Brooke. The composer is at the piano in all of them.

**13 June 1917** 14 German bombers attack London, killing 162 people and injuring 432.

**15 June 1917** Móric, Count Esterházy de Galantha replaces István, Count Tisza de Borosjenö et Szeged as Prime Minister of Hungary.

Siegfried Sassoon sends a letter to his commanding officer with several copies to writers, journalists, and politicians. He claims that the war is being deliberately prolonged by those who could stop it. “I believe that this war, upon which I entered as a war of defence and liberation, has now become a war of aggression and conquest.”

02:30 Austro-Hungarian forces counterattack in Trentino, successfully countered by the Italians. The day ends in stalemate.

The Espionage Act is signed by President Wilson. It is designed to punish anyone for criticizing the war. Among the provisions is one to empower the Postmaster-General to refuse to mail publications considered detrimental to the war effort. Many socialist and German language magazines will be banned from the US Mail.

All Irish veterans of the Easter Rebellion still in custody are freed by the British government.

**16 June 1917** The first issue of the journal *De Stijl* is published, largely by Theo van Doesburg, to advocate the artistic theories of a group of Dutch artists such as Piet Mondriaan, Vilmos Huszar, the architect JJP Oud and the poet A. Kok

**17 June 1917** *Ziegfeld’s Follies of 1917* opens at the New Amsterdam Theatre, New York with the finale to Act I written by Victor Herbert (58).

**18 June 1917** Italian artillery opens up all along the Trentino front from Porta Lepozze to the Assa Gorge.

**19 June 1917** 06:00 The Italian assault begins. They manage to take the summit of Monte Ortigara but elsewhere the attack fails.

The British Parliament grants suffrage to women over 30.

**23 June 1917** Russian forces attack the Austro-Hungarians again, with some success.

Ernst Seidler von Feuchtenegg replaces Heinrich, Count Clam-Martinitz as Prime Minister of Austria.

Four suffragettes are arrested in Washington after they are attacked by bystanders, two at the House of Representatives and two at the White House.

**24 June 1917** The Russian Black Sea Fleet mutinies at Sevastopol.

**25 June 1917** An Austrian counterattack in Trentino recaptures Monte Ortigara.

**26 June 1917** The first contingent of the American Expeditionary Force lands in France. The commander, General John J. Pershing declares “Lafayette, we are here!”

**27 June 1917** Eleftherios Kiriakou Venizelos arrives in Athens and proclaims his pro-Allies government the legitimate one. He replaces Alexandros Thrasivoulou Zaimis as Prime Minister.

Bandsman 2nd class Percy Grainger (34) applies for United States citizenship.

**30 June 1917** Austro-Hungarian forces retake Porta Maora, the last position lost to the Italian Trentino offensive. The battle has caused 32,000 casualties.

Incidental music to Moreto’s play *La adúltera penitente* by Joaquín Turina (34) is performed for the first time, in Barcelona.

**1 July 1917** Russian forces begin an offensive along a 160 km front against Germans, Austro-Hungarians, and Turks, toward Lemberg (Lviv).

**2 July 1917** Greece declares war on Germany, Turkey, and Bulgaria.

**3 July 1917** *Rapsodia Satanica*, a film with music by Pietro Mascagni (53) is shown for the first time, in Teatro Augusteo, Rome.

Race riots over the last three days in East St. Louis, Illinois leave nine whites and over 100 blacks dead.

**5 July 1917** Russia grants autonomy to the provinces of Courland (Latvia) and Livonia (Latvia/Estonia).

**6 July 1917** German defenders do heavy damage to advancing Russians at Brzezany (Berezhany, Ukraine), 80 km southeast of Lemberg (Lviv).

Howeitat tribesmen commanded by TE Lawrence and Auda abu Tayi capture Aqaba after a two-month trek across the desert.

On doctor’s orders, Frederick Delius (55) leaves his home in Grez-sur-Loing for a spa in Normandy. He can barely walk.

**7 July 1917** In the largest air raid to date, 22 Gotha bombers attack London, killing 54 people and injuring 190.

**8 July 1917** US President Woodrow Wilson orders that all exports of food, fuel, and war supplies be placed in the hands of the federal government.

**9 July 1917** Two-thirds of Polish soldiers in the German army renounce their oath of fealty.

In a New York courtroom, Alexander Berkman and Emma Goldman are found guilty of obstructing the draft. They are both fined $10,000 and sentenced to two years in federal penitentiaries.

The battleship *HMS Vanguard* explodes in Scapa Flow and goes down quickly with the loss of about 800 men. There are two survivors. The blast is probably internal and accidental.

**12 July 1917** Over the last six days, Russian troops have advanced 50 km against the Austro-Hungarians south of the Dniester.

After riots, food shortages, and strikes, the government of Portugal declares a State of Siege.

Erik Satie (51) is sentenced to eight days in prison, a fine of 100 francs and 1,000 francs in damages in the libel suit of Jean Poueigh brought as a result of the card Satie sent following Poueigh’s review of *Parade.* See 18 May 1917 and 27 November 1917.

In the midst of a strike by copper miners in Bisbee, Arizona, 2,000 armed vigilantes seize the telegraph office and round up citizens, many of whom are not even miners. 1,186 of the rounded up men are put on to boxcars with manure on the floor. Along with 186 armed guards and a machine gun, the men are brought across the state line and left at Hermanas, New Mexico. Two men are killed in the operation.

**13 July 1917** Sonata for cello and piano by Frank Bridge (38) is performed for the first time, in Wigmore Hall, London.

**14 July 1917** Georg Michaelis replaces Theobald von Bethmann Hollweg as Chancellor of Germany and Minister-President of Prussia.

16 suffragettes are arrested while picketing in front of the White House.

After two days, US troops find the Bisbee men at Hermanas, New Mexico and detain many of them. No criminal action will ever be taken against the vigilantes.

**16 July 1917** Allied artillery opens up along the Flanders front in preparation for a new offensive.

**17 July 1917** Workers, soldiers, and sailors take to the streets in Petrograd demanding a new revolution and the overthrow of the provisional government. Lenin, feeling the time is not right, refuses to become involved. The uprising will be put down tomorrow.

King George V orders all British princes to drop their German titles. The name of the royal family is changed to Windsor.

**18 July 1917** Agents of the Russian provisional government raid the offices of *Pravda* and Bolshevik party headquarters. The only Bolsheviks captured are Anatoly Vasilyevich Lunacharsky and Lev Davidovich Trotsky.

**19 July 1917** After being slightly pushed back by Russian forces, the Central Powers counterattack east of Lemberg (Lviv) as the Russian army begins to collapse.

The German Reichstag passes a resolution 212-126 expressing its desire for peace.

German and colonial troops are attacked by British and colonial troops west of Kilwa, German East Africa (Tanzania). After a daylong battle, the Germans withdraw.

**20 July 1917** Exiled politicians from Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Slovenia issue the Corfu Declaration calling for a unified south Slav state called the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, under the Karadordevic dynasty.

Siegfried Sassoon appears before a military medical board who determine that he is suffering from shell shock.

**21 July 1917** Alyeksandr Fyodorovich Kerensky replaces Prince Georgy Yevgenyevich Lvov as Prime Minister of Russia. He organizes a new cabinet.

A Russian offensive in the northern sector of the eastern front begins. Officers threaten their soldiers with guns to get them to attack.

**22 July 1917** Siam declares war on Germany.

**23 July 1917** The Russian offensive begun 21 July ends.

**26 July 1917** German and Austro-Hungarian troops capture Tarnopol (Ternopol, Ukraine), 120 km east of Lemberg (Lviv).

**27 July 1917** British troops occupy 2,700 meters of the abandoned German front line at Ypres.

**28 July 1917** Some 8,000-10,000 African-Americans march down Fifth Avenue in New York in silent protest against lynching, apartheid laws, and mob violence against blacks.

**30 July 1917** An earthquake centered in Szechwan (Sichuan) Province, China kills 1,800 people.

Siegfried Sassoon’s letter of 15 June is read out in the House of Commons.

In an attempt to relieve her pain, an appendectomy is performed on Lili Boulanger (23). It does not produce the desired effect.

**31 July 1917** 03:50 After ten days of artillery bombardment, Allied (Australia-Belgium-France-New Zealand-United Kingdom) forces attack Germans at Ypres (Third Battle of Ypres). They gain Bixschoote, St. Julien, and Pilkem north of the city. Irish poet Francis Ledwidge and Welsh poet Ellis Humphrey Evans (Hedd Wyn) are killed in action near Boezinge, Belgium.

Siegfried Sassoon’s letter of 15 June is published in *The Times* of London.

The Petrograd government dissolves the Finnish parliament.

**1 August 1917** The Vatican publishes a Peace Note from Pope Benedict XV. It suggests seven points on which a peace might be based.

Allied troops at Ypres hold in the face of German counterattacks.

IWW organizer Frank Little is kidnapped and hanged from a railroad trestle at Butte, Montana.

**2 August 1917** Artillery shelling continues at Ypres, but infantry advances are suspended due to torrential rains.

Sailors aboard the *Prinzregent Luitpold* in Wilhelmshaven mutiny against living conditions. About 75 are immediately arrested.

Frederick S. Converse (46) enlists in the Massachusetts State Guard.

**3 August 1917** Yury Fyodorovich Stravinsky, a Russian soldier on the Romanian front, dies of typhoid in Iasi. His brother Igor (35) learns of it by cable in Rome.

**5 August 1917** The German fleet in Wilhelmshaven puts to sea to prevent further mutinies.

The National Guard in the United States is nationalized.

Three dance pieces by Charles T. Griffes (32) are performed for the first time, in Atlantic City: the Japanese pantomime *Sho-jo*, the Japanese folk-dance *Sakura-sakura* and the Assyrian dance *A Trip to Syria*.

**6 August 1917** After bogging down in torrential rain, British forces resume their advance at Ypres.

Having been discharged from the Missouri National Guard, Virgil Thomson (20) enlists in the regular army, in the 129th artillery, a regiment that includes Captain Harry S. Truman.

**8 August 1917** Petty Officer Walter Yeo, severely wounded at the Battle of Jutland, is admitted to Queen Mary’s Hospital in Sidcup, Kent. Here he will undergo the first major skin graft operation, performed by Harry Gillies of New Zealand.

**10 August 1917** A general strike is declared in Spain with the intention of overthrowing the monarchy and instituting a republic. Within three days the uprising will be ruthlessly suppressed by the army.

British forces attack on the Gheluvelt Plateau but they achieve only small gains.

**12 August 1917** Anton von Webern (33) arrives in Prague to take up a position at the Deutsches Landestheater.

Ten Gothas drop bombs on Southend, killing 32 people and injuring 46.

**13 August 1917** Paul Hindemith (21) receives his army record card after his induction into the German army. He is stationed at Frankfurt-am-Main. Later sent to France, he will never see action, always having musical duties. “I play the big drum,” he reports home.

**14 August 1917** Feng Kuo-chang (Feng Guozhang) replaces Li Yuan-hung (Li Yuanhong) as President of China. China declares war on Germany and Austria-Hungary.

Jeering crowds attack suffragists near the White House in Washington.

**15 August 1917** A Polish National Committee is established in Lausanne. This will be recognized by the Allies as the official voice of Poland.

Suffragists resume their protest at the White House and are once again attacked by onlookers, many of them US military personnel. Small riots go on through the day.

**16 August 1917** After two weeks of rain, the British resume their offensive at Ypres. They gain Langemarck but little else.

**18 August 1917** The Esterházy government in Hungary falls, unable to bring about electoral reform.

Italians battle Austro-Hungarians along the Isonzo River for the eleventh time. In fighting which will last until 15 September, the Italians will advance ten kilometers.

The Byelorussian Rada is formed.

A fire today and tomorrow destroys one square kilometer in Thessaloniki. This constitutes one-third of the city. Most of the 73,000 left homeless are Jews.

Henry Cowell’s (20) opera *The Building of Bamba*, to words of Varian, is performed for the first time, in an incomplete state, in Halcyon, California. See 7 August 1930.

**20 August 1917** The government of Great Britain pledges to foster self-governing institutions in India.

Sándor Werkerle replaces Móric, Count Esterházy de Galantha as Prime Minister of Hungary.

**23 August 1917** After two black soldiers are beaten by Houston police, about 150 armed black soldiers from Camp Logan march into the city. Confronted by armed police and white citizens, a melee ensues which leaves 20 people dead. Order is restored on 24 August.

**26 August 1917** French forces launch an attack on an 18 km front at Verdun. They capture Le Morte Homme.

**28 August 1917** Percy Grainger (35) begins making recordings for the Columbia Graphophone Company in New York.

**29 August 1917** The Military Service Act receives royal assent. It provides for the first conscription in Canada.

**30 August 1917** Turkish forces capture Merivan, Persia.

**1 September 1917** 04:00 German troops attack and cross the Dvina creating an eleven km bridgehead.

**2 September 1917** German forces attacking out of the Dvina bridgehead encounter stiff Russian resistance.

Admiral Alfred von Tirpitz and other conservatives found the German Fatherland Party to oppose peace initiatives.

**3 September 1917** German forces cross the Gross Jegel towards Riga.

In their first night raid, four Gothas bomb the Chatham naval station, killing 131 people and injuring 90.

**4 September 1917** With few prospects in Mexico, Silvestre Revueltas (17) and his younger brother Fermín enroll in St. Edward’s College in Austin, Texas.

**5 September 1917** German forces capture Riga as Russian troops retreat towards Wenden (Cesis, Latvia).

Two leaders of the Wilhelmshaven mutiny are executed by firing squad near Cologne.

Federal agents raid Industrial Workers of the World headquarters in 24 American cities. Ten people are arrested. Over three days they confiscate five tons of material.

**6 September 1917** Prime Minister Kerensky orders the arrest of General Lavr Kornilov who is presently moving towards Petrograd with troops, fearing Kornilov will establish a military dictatorship. Workers and Bolsheviks join in defense of Petrograd.

**10 September 1917** Sun Yat-sen (Sun Yixian) becomes Generalissimo of the Chinese government.

**12 September 1917** A majority of the Petrograd Soviet support the Bolsheviks.

Paul Painlevé replaces Alexandre Felix Joseph Ribot as Prime Minister of France.

The German government establishes a Polish Council of Regency to rule the kingdom, in lieu of a king.

**13 September 1917** Robert Eugene Ward is born in Cleveland, last of five children born to Albert E. Ward, owner of a moving and storage company, and Carrie Mollenkopf.

*The Gulf Between* is released in the United States. It is the first feature length film in Technicolor.

*The Forgotten Rite* for orchestra by John Ireland (38) is performed for the first time, in Queen’s Hall, London.

**14 September 1917** General Lavr Kornilov, commander of the Russian army, is arrested at Mogilëv, accused of plotting the overthrow of the provisional government.

Incidental music to Móricz’s play *Lark Song* by Zoltán Kodály (34) is performed for the first time, in Budapest.

**15 September 1917** The Provisional Government proclaims the Russian Republic and establishes a five-man Directorate to run it.

The US government takes control of the sugar industry in the country.

**17 September 1917** Isang Yun is born in Duk San, San Chun Gun, Tongyong (Chung Mu), Korea, son of Yun Ki Hyon, a poet.

Arnold Schoenberg (43) is inducted into the Austro-Hungarian army for a second time, forcing him to suspend work on *Der Jakobsleiter*.

**18 September 1917** The Moscow Soviet comes under the control of the Bolsheviks.

In Yalta, Sergey Rakhmaninov (44) makes his last appearance in Russia, performing Liszt’s (†31) E flat Piano Concerto.

The United States Patent Office grants a patent to the Honolulu Ad Club for a musical instrument called a ukulele.

**19 September 1917** Argentina breaks diplomatic relations with Germany.

**20 September 1917** After more torrential rains, British forces resume their attack at Ypres. British and Australian troops advance southeast of the city. They make modest gains. In response, the Germans introduce mustard gas to human warfare.

The Income War Tax Act receives royal assent. It is the first income tax in Canada.

**24 September 1917** Over the next week, Gustav Holst’s (43) classes at Morley College, London are interrupted by air raids. The basement gymnasium that he uses as a rehearsal hall is also an air raid shelter.

**25 September 1917** Paul Hindemith’s (21) first published work is brought out by Breitkopf and Härtel, Leipzig: Three Pieces for cello and piano.

**26 September 1917** Allied forces advance 900 more meters at Ypres and occupy all of Polygon Wood.

On the recommendation of Paul Dukas (51), Francis Poulenc (18) visits Paul Vidal, conductor of the Opéra-Comique, in search of composition lessons. Poulenc shows him his *Rapsodie nègre*. When he sees the dedication to Satie (51) Vidal stands and bellows, “Your work stinks, it is ridiculous, it is merely a load of balls...Ah! I see you are running with Stravinsky (35), Satie, and company. Well then, good day!”

Vaslav Nizhinsky dances for the last time, in *La Spectre de la Rose* and *Petrushka*, with the Ballets Russes in Buenos Aires.

**27 September 1917** At the opening of the State Theatre in Petrograd, the audience requires that the orchestra play the *Marseillaise* no less than nine times.

Edgard Degas dies in Paris at the age of 83.

**29 September 1917** British troops rout the Turks at Ramadia (Ar Ramadi, Iraq), west of Baghdad.

**1 October 1917** *Marching Song of Democracy* by Percy Grainger (35) is performed for the first time, in Worcester, Massachusetts. It is wildly successful.

**2 October 1917** The British government orders an embargo on trade with neutral nations Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden to prevent goods ending up in the hands of the Germans.

Elmer A. Sperry receives a US patent for a gyrocompass, already in use by the US Navy.

**3 October 1917** A commission of inquiry in Bihar finds in favor of the peasants against their British landlords. It is Gandhi’s first victory in India.

**4 October 1917** Another British attack at Ypres gains them 650 meters.

Erik Satie (51) writes to his publisher, Alexandre Rouart: “I am in the most critical situation: penniless.”

*The Spirit of England* op.80 for solo voice, chorus, and orchestra by Edward Elgar (60) is performed completely for the first time, in Birmingham. See 3 May 1916.

**5 October 1917** Peru breaks diplomatic relations with Germany.

**7 October 1917** Hussein Kamel, Sultan of Egypt, dies in Cairo and is succeeded by his brother Ahmed Fuad.

Uruguay breaks diplomatic relations with Germany.

**8 October 1917** Lev Trotsky becomes Chairman of the Petrograd Soviet Presidium.

**11 October 1917** Trois chansons pour choeur mixte sans accompagnement, by Maurice Ravel (42) to his own words, are performed for the first time, in Paris.

Igor Stravinsky (35) completes the short score to *Les Noces* in Switzerland, but it will not be performed until 6 April 1923.

**12 October 1917** In an attack on German positions at Bellevue Spur, near Passchendaele, New Zealanders lose 3,700 casualties, of whom 845 are killed. It is the largest amount of casualties of any single day in New Zealand history and constitutes 0.3% of the entire population of the country.

**13 October 1917** The Board of Education of New York City forbids any lectures about German operas.

**15 October 1917** A French firing squad executes Margaret Gertrude Zelle (Mata Hari) as a German spy at Vincennes. Reportedly refusing a blindfold, she blows a kiss to the riflemen.

**16 October 1917** Ruth Crawford (16) has her first piano lesson with Agathe Backer-Grøndahl at the School of Musical Art, Jacksonville, Florida.

**17 October 1917** The two ends of the Trans-Australian Railway meet near Ooldea in South Australia. The line joins Brisbane to Perth.

British and Nigerian troops attack Germans and colonials at Mahiwa, German East Africa (Tanzania), 70 km up the Lukuledi River from Lindi. After a daylong battle, no advantage is gained by either side.

**18 October 1917** Battle at Mahiwa continues for a second day without strategic advantage.

**19 October 1917** Husein ibn Ali proclaims himself to be King of Arabia.

Nils Edén replaces Karl Johan Gustaf Swartz as Prime Minister of Sweden.

In a night raid, 19-20 October, eleven German dirigibles fly over England and bomb towns from Hull and Norwich to London.

Symphony no.1 “Sermons in Stone” by John Alden Carpenter (41) is performed publicly for the first time, in Chicago.

**20 October 1917** The Provisional Council of the Republic, a sort of “pre-parliament”, forms in Petrograd. In its first meeting, the Bolsheviks walk out.

British and colonial troops take Jabal Hamrin on the Diyala River northeast of Samarra (Iraq).

**22 October 1917** *Her Regiment*, a musical play by Victor Herbert (58) to words of Le Baron, is performed for the first time, in Springfield, Massachusetts. See 12 November 1917.

**23 October 1917** French forces attack the Germans at Malmaison. By 2 November, they will eliminate the Soissons salient and take all the heights above the Aisne.

Members of the American Expeditionary Force fire their first shots in anger.

Two piano pieces by John Alden Carpenter (41), *Little Indian* and *Little Nigger*, are performed for the first time, in Aeolian Hall, New York.

**24 October 1917** Austro-Hungarian and German forces cross the Isonzo River at Caporetto and battle Italians for the twelfth time. The German troops, led by Capt. Erwin Rommel, take Caporetto.

**25 October 1917** German and Austrian troops take Monte Stol.

**26 October 1917** 05:30 Canadian troops begin an advance toward Passchendale in the rain.

Austro-Hungarian and German troops retake the Bainsizza Plateau and Monte Maggiore.

Brazil declares war on Germany.

A version of Modest Musorgsky’s (†36) *Sorochintsy Fair,* organized by Cesar Cui (82) using all available music, some orchestrations by Lyadov and additional music by Cui, is performed for the first time, at the Theatre of Musical Drama, Petrograd.

Six Songs op.88 by Jean Sibelius (51) to words of Franzen and Runeberg are performed for the first time, in Helsinki.

*Mujeres españolas* op.17 by Joquín Turina (34) is performed for the first time, in Madrid.

**27 October 1917** Austrian and German troops take Cividale and reach the Torre Rivers. 700,000 Italians begin a retreat of 160 km.

**28 October 1917** The Austro-Hungarian advance in Italy reaches Udine, 100 km northeast of Venice.

**29 October 1917** German forces breach the Italian line on the Torre River.

**30 October 1917** Canadians renew their attack at Ypres, taking Bellevue Spur.

Vittorio Emmanuele Orlando replaces Paolo Boselli as Prime Minister of Italy.

The *Providence Journal* demands that German-born Karl Muck conduct *The Star-Spangled Banner* at the Boston Symphony Orchestra concert in Providence tonight. The orchestra manager, Charles Ellis, decides against it. Rumors spread that Muck refused to perform it, even though he was completely unaware of the decision.

**31 October 1917** Australian forces take Beersheba (Be’er Sheva) from the Turks, 70 km southwest of Jerusalem.

The Austro-Hungarian and German advance in Italy reaches Tagliamento, 70 km northeast of Venice. The Italians destroy the bridges over the Tagliamento River.

Georg Michaelis resigns as Chancellor of Germany and Minister-President of Prussia.

**1 November 1917** British forces begin an assault on Gaza.

Georg, Count Hertling replaces Georg Michaelis as Chancellor of Germany and Minister-President of Prussia.

*Five Poems of Ancient China and Japan* op.10 for solo voice and piano by Charles T. Griffes (33) to words of East Asian poets, are performed for the first time, in Aeolian Hall, New York, the composer at the piano.

**2 November 1917** A Soviet commune is established in Baku.

British foreign minister Lord Balfour sends the following letter to Lord Rothschild for delivery to the Zionist Federation: “His Majesty’s Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the attainment of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of the existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.”

German troops succeed in crossing the Tagliamento River in two places.

Walter Damrosch, conductor of the New York Philharmonic, publishes the first of two articles in the *New York Times* attacking Karl Muck for his reluctance to conduct *The Star-Spangled Banner*. He prefers not to hear Muck conduct it, considering Muck’s citizenship and attitude toward the war.

An observatory containing a 100” (254 cm) Hale telescope is completed atop Mt. Wilson, California.

**3 November 1917** Italian forces set up a defensive line along the River Piave.

Manuel García Prieto, marqués de Alhucemas, replaces Eduardo Dato y Iradier as Prime Minister of Spain.

**4 November 1917** A group calling itself the Presidents of Planet Earth issues a manifesto in St. Petersburg calling for the overthrow of the Provisional Government of Russia. Among the signatories is Arthur Lourié (26).

**5 November 1917** The Russian provisional government orders the rearrest of all Bolshevik leaders now free on bail.

British and colonial troops make headway against the Turks before Tikrit.

The Turkish Interior Ministry orders the deportation of all Armenians still working on the railroads.

**6 November 1917** Canadian forces take Passchendaele and the ridge beyond effectively ending the Third Battle of Ypres. During the battle of over three months, Allied forces advance six km at a cost of 570,000 casualties.

Turkish forces withdraw from Tikrit and the British enter the town, 150 km north of Baghdad.

Armed Bolsheviks seize railway stations, bridges, the state bank, and telephone exchange in and around Petrograd. The pro-Bolshevik crew of the battleship *Aurora* anchors its ship in the Neva River adjacent to the Winter Palace, the seat of the provisional government. Hard at work on the revision of his Piano Concerto no.1, Sergey Rakhmaninov barely notices the fighting.

Alois Hába (24) is sent to the Italian front on the River Tagliamento.

The State of New York votes to grant its female citizens the right to vote.

Sonatina no.3for piano by Ferruccio Busoni (51) is performed for the first time, in Zürich Tonahalle.

**7 November 1917** 10:00 The Bolsheviks announce the overthrow of the Provisional Government of Russia. Russian Prime Minister Kerensky escapes Petrograd in a car owned by the American Embassy. Bolshevik forces take the Winter Palace with a loss of six lives. The new government announces their intention to withdraw the country from the war. The Second Congress of Soviets convenes in Petrograd. 390 of the 650 delegates are controlled by Lenin. Lev Borisovich Kamenev becomes President of the Russian Republic.

Austro-Hungarian and German forces reach the Piave River, 25 km northeast of Venice. Here, Italian troops halt their advance, 110 km from its start.

After eight months of struggle, British forces finally take Gaza from the Turks.

**8 November 1917** On the day after the Bolshevik Revolution, Anatoly Vasilyevich Lunacharsky is appointed People’s Commissar of Public Education. He will oversee Soviet music during the first twelve years of its existence. Other members of the cabinet of the new Russian government are announced: Chairman of the People’s Commissars: Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, Commissar of the Interior: Alexis Rykov, Foreign Commissar: Trotsky, plus others, including Stalin. The term “minister” is dropped as too bourgeois. The Council of People’s Commissars issues a Decree of Peace, proposing a three-month armistice and negotiations toward a general settlement. Lev Borisovich Kamenev is named Chairman of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee (head of state).

**9 November 1917** William Walton (15) wins the Dean’s Prize at the choir school, Oxford.

**10 November 1917** Kerensky reaches Pskov where hundreds of Cossacks begin a march on Petrograd.

Violin Sonata no.2 op.108 by Gabriel Fauré (72) is performed for the first time, by the Société National de Musique, Paris.

*Elégie* for orchestra by Heitor Villa-Lobos (30) is performed for the first time, in the Teatro Municipal, Rio de Janeiro. See 3 February 1917.

**11 November 1917** Otto Ritter von Dandl replaces Georg, Prince von Hertling as President of the Council of Ministers of Bavaria.

Piano Concerto no.2 by Alyeksandr Glazunov (52) is performed for the first time, at Petrograd Conservatory, the composer conducting.

**12 November 1917** Cossack troops attempt to enter Petrograd but are defeated by sailors, workers, and Red Guards.

*Her Regiment*, a musical play by Victor Herbert (58) to words of Le Baron, is performed for the first time in New York, at the Broadhurst Theatre. See 22 October 1917.

**13 November 1917** British troops break the Turkish defense at Junction Station, west of Jerusalem.

**14 November 1917** Bolsheviks and Social Revolutionaries gain control in Tashkent.

Leos Janácek’s (63) orchestral work *The Fiddler’s Child* is performed for the first time, in Prague.

**15 November 1917** Cossack leader Aleksey Kaledin assembles an anti-Bolshevik army of Don Cossacks. This is the first White Army of the Don.

During a general strike, the Finnish Parliament assumes supreme authority in Finland.

The Musavat Party declares the Transcaucasian Commissariat in Azerbaijan.

Neil Primrose, MP, member of the Privy Council, is killed in action near Ramla, Palestine.

40 guards, with the blessing of the warden, go on a rampage at the Occoquan Workhouse near Lorton, Virginia, beating, punching, choking the suffragists imprisoned there for peacefully protesting at the White House.

**16 November 1917** Bolsheviks take power in Moscow after several days of fighting.

Germans and Austrians attack along the Piave River but make little progress.

Anzac troops take Jaffa while British units seize Ramallah.

**17 November 1917** Georges Clemenceau replaces Paul Painlevé as Prime Minister of France.

Auguste Rodin dies in Meudon at the age of 77.

*Rhapsodie* for two flutes, clarinet, and piano by Arthur Honegger (25) is performed for the first time, in the Parthénon, Paris. It is very well received.

Several new works by Heitor Villa-Lobos (30) are performed for the first time, in the Salão Nobre, Rio de Janeiro, including the piano pieces *Movimento de Tarantella* (2 pianos), *Kankikis* and *Suite Floral Idîlio na Rêde*, *Improviso no.7* and *Martíro dos insetos*, both for violin and piano, and *Cromo no.2* for solo voice and piano.

**19 November 1917** The Ukranian Rada declares Ukraine an independent, non-Bolshevik, People’s Republic.

**20 November 1917** British forces use massed tanks for the first time, in their attack against Germans along a ten km front south of Cambrai. They advance eight km in ten hours taking Gramcourt, Marcoing, Havrincourt and Ribecourt.

Jan Kucharzewski becomes the first Prime Minister of Poland.

**21 November 1917** A Bolshevik government for the Province of Livonia takes control in Valka (Latvia).

Yakov Mikhailovich Sverdlov replaces Lev Borisovich Kamenev as Chairman of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee (head of state).

**22 November 1917** People’s Commissar for Foreign Affairs Lev Trotsky begins publishing secret agreements made by the Allies revealing goals of territorial aggrandizement.

Austrian and German forces take Monte Tomba but the Italian line generally holds.

A German counterattack at Cambrai takes Fontaine.

**23 November 1917** The Second All-Russian Congress of Peasant Deputies meets in Petrograd. Many Social Revolutionaries leave the city.

The Bolshevik government publishes the full text of the Sykes-Picot Agreement of 16 May 1916 in *Pravda* and *Izvestia*.

British attempts to take Bourlon Ridge at Cambrai fail.

**25 November 1917** German and colonial troops cross the Rovuma River into Portuguese East Africa (Mozambique) at Ngomano, beating off Portuguese troops who try to stop them.

**26 November 1917** The Bolshevik government offers an armistice to the Central Powers.

A Tatar constituent assembly assumes power in the Crimea led by Kadets and the Tatar National Party

The *Manchester Guardian* publishes the text of the secret Sykes-Picot Agreement of 16 May 1916 recently published in Russia.

Siegfried Sassoon is recertified fit for duty.

The National Hockey League is founded by six Canadian teams in Montreal.

*Trois poèmes* op.18 for voice(s) and piano or orchestra by Charles Koechlin to words of Kipling (tr. Fabulet and d’Humières) is performed completely for the first time, in Théâtre du Vieux-Colombier, Paris, the composer conducting on the eve of his 50th birthday. See 11 March 1908.

**27 November 1917** Erik Satie (51) appeals the judgment of 12 July 1917. Eventually the sentence will be suspended and the Princesse de Polignac helps him pay the damages and fine.

The joint Austrian-German offensive in Italy ends. The front stabilizes.

**28 November 1917** The Provisional Assembly of Estonia becomes the supreme authority in the province and grants its Council of Elders emergency powers.

A Bolshevik coup d’etat succeeds in Byelorussia.

**29 November 1917** Pietro Mascagni (53) learns that one of his sons, Edouardo (Dino), is now a prisoner of war of the Austrians, having been captured during the recent Isonzo breakthrough. His other son, Domenico (Mimi), was also in the same fighting, but survived in tact.

*Phantasy on British Folk Songs* for string quartet by Gustav Holst (43) is performed for the first time, in Steinway Hall, London.

Theme with Variations op.40 for piano by Carl Nielsen (52) is performed for the first time, in Copenhagen.

**30 November 1917** German forces counterattack against British at Cambrai, regaining much of the territory they lost.

**1 December 1917** The last resistance in German East Africa ends.

German troops take Masnieres and Les Rue Vertes near Cambrai.

**2 December 1917** Hostilities between Russia and the Central Powers cease.

The Democratic Moldavian Republic is proclaimed at Kishinev.

Georg Friederich Count von Hertling replaces Georg Michaelis as Prime Minister of Prussia.

**4 December 1917** The British withdraw from their initial gains at Cambrai and the offensive ends.

**5 December 1917** The All-Turkestan Muslim Congress declares autonomy for South Central Asia at Kokand.

German forces take La Vacquerie on the Cambrai front.

Leos Janácek (63) writes to the singer Gabriela Horvátová, “I don’t read the papers after the terrible revolution in Russia. Two Jews are ruling 160 million Slavs. That’s really terrible…Days of suffering await us-but heads up!” (Tyrrell II, 193)

**6 December 1917** The Finnish Parliament declares independence from Russia. The acting Head of State is Pehr Evind Svinhufvud.

A German counterattack south of Cambrai ends after winning back most of the British gains in November.

In a narrow passage of the harbor of Halifax, Nova Scotia, the French munitions ship *Mont Blanc* collides with the Norwegian relief vessel *Imo.* The collision causes a fire aboard the *Mont Blanc* and the crew abandons ship allowing it to drift towards the city where firemen, unaware of its cargo, begin to fight the fire. At 09:05 the 3,000 ton *Mont Blanc*, carrying 2,300 tons of wet and dry picric acid, 200 tons of TNT, ten tons of gun cotton, 35 tons of benzol, and 300 live artillery shells, explodes. One gun from the ship lands almost six km away. Part of the anchor, weighing over 500 kg, lands five km away. Windows are broken for a distance of 80 km. The shock is felt in Sydney, over 430 km away. 1,600 people are killed instantly, 9,000 are wounded. Many of those injured will die soon as hospitals are stretched to four or five times their capacity. Fires begin throughout the city from overturned stoves. 1,630 buildings are destroyed, many more damaged. 31,000 people are left homeless. It is the largest man-made explosion before the atomic bomb.

**7 December 1917** The Russian Senate, in effect the Supreme Court, rules that the Bolshevik government is illegal. The Bolshevik government abolishes the Senate.

Almost three months after his induction, Arnold Schoenberg (43) is released from military service for reasons of health.

The United States declares war on Austria-Hungary.

*From Dusk Till Dawn*, a ballet by Arnold Bax (34) to a scenario by Lowther, is performed for the first time, in the Palace Theatre, London.

**9 December 1917** Romania signs an armistice with the Central Powers at Foçsani.

Turkish troops abandon Jerusalem, ending 400 years of Turkish rule.

**10 December 1917** The Vatican forbids Roman Catholics to dance the tango.

An Italian submarine sinks the Austrian battleship *Wien* off Trieste.

**11 December 1917** British troops enter Jerusalem. It is the first time that Jerusalem is in Christian hands since the Crusades.

13 African-American soldiers are hanged at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio for their part in the disturbances of last 23 August.

*Das Christ-Elflein*, a spieloper by Hans Pfitzner (48) to his own words after von Stach, is performed for the first time, in Dresden. This is a revision of his incidental music for von Stach’s play. See 11 December 1906.

*Rapsodie nègre*, for baritone, piano, string quartet, flute, and clarinet by Francis Poulenc (18) is performed for the first time, at the Vieux-Colombier, Paris. This is the first work of Poulenc to be performed in public. When the singer does not appear, the composer performs the vocal part.

**12 December 1917** A French troop train careens out of control going down a steep mountain grade near Modane, France. The crash and resulting fire kills as many as 800 people.

Pro-German Sidónio Bernardino Cardoso da Silva Pais replaces Afonso Augusto da Costa as Prime Minister of Portugal.

**14 December 1917** Russian Commissar of Public Education Anatoly Lunacharsky calls on “all comrades—painters, musicians, and artists—who wish to work towards the rapprochement of the broad popular masses with art in all its aspects, as well as the comrade-members of the Union of Proletarian Artists and Writers, to report to the office of the Commissar of Public Enlightenment in the Winter Palace.” Not many show up, but a few important people do.

**15 December 1917** An armistice between Russia and the Central Powers is reached on the eastern front at Brest-Litovsk (Brest, Belarus).

The Democratic Moldavian Republic declares independence and petitions Romania for help against the Bolsheviks.

Settings of Five Slovak Folk Songs for male chorus, by Béla Bartók (36), are performed for the first time, in Vienna.

*Of One That is so Fair and Bright* op.34/3 for vocal soloists and chorus by Gustav Holst (43) to anonymous words is performed for the first time, in Newcastle.

**16 December 1917** Bolsheviks occupy Russian army headquarters at Mogilëv.

France authorizes the formation of a Czecho-Slovak Legion connected to the Czechoslovak National Council and under the authority of the French High Command.

The first suite of *Ancient Airs and Dances* for orchestra by Ottorino Respighi (38) is performed for the first time, in Teatro Augusteo, Rome.

**17 December 1917** Voting takes place to elect the 13th Parliament of Canada. The “Unionist” government of Conservative Prime Minister Robert Borden gains strength.

**18 December 1917** *Improvisation on “Wie wohl ist mir, o Freund der Seele”* for two pianos by Ferruccio Busoni (51) is performed for the first time, in the Zürich Tonhalle.

**19 December 1917** General Kornilov and other members of the Russian general staff escape detention in Bykhov. All of them will eventually reach the volunteer army on the Don.

Quintet in g minor for piano and strings by Arnold Bax (34) is performed for the first time, privately, in the Savoy Hotel, London. See 12 May 1920.

**20 December 1917** The Cheka (secret police) is established in Russia by the Council of People’s Commissars.

**21 December 1917** An explosion and fire in a coal mine in Onoura, Kirino on Kyushu, Japan kills 376 people.

**22 December 1917** Peace negotiations between the Bolsheviks and the Central Powers begin at Brest-Litovsk (Brest, Belarus).

Heinrich, Baron Bodman replaces Alexander, Baron Dusch as Prime Minister of Baden.

Two new carols by Hubert Parry (69) are performed for the first time, in London: *I sang the birth*, and *Welcome Yule.*

**25 December 1917** Texas Rangers rampage through a Mexican neighborhood in Ponvenir searching for robbery suspects. 15 Mexicans are killed, ten others are tortured.

**26 December 1917** An earthquake centered near Guatemala City kills over 2,000 people.

US President Wilson declares all rail and water systems in the country to be under federal control.

**27 December 1917** All Russian banks are nationalized.

**28 December 1917** A Moscow newspaper announces that Sergey Rakhmaninov (44) is leaving the city for a concert tour of Scandinavia “lasting more than two months.”

The first round of negotiations at Brest-Litovsk ends with an invitation to the Allies to participate.

Alois Hába (24) is recalled from the Italian front and transferred to the War Propaganda Office in Vienna. He is ordered to organize a song collection for the army.

**29 December 1917** An autonomous government for Latvia is declared within the Soviet Republic.

Frederick Delius (55) writes that he and his wife have decided to return to England from their home in France. It is a particularly brutal winter and coal is no longer available.

**30 December 1917** Arthur Lourié (26) and the artists Vladimir Tatlin and Nikolay Punin go to see Commissar of Culture Anatoly Lunacharsky for permission to stage Khlebnikov’s play *Lady Death Makes a Mistake*. Lunacharsky does not give his permission but instead offers them all jobs in the Narkompros (People’s Commissariat for Enlightenment). Lourié will lead MUZO, the music division.

The British troop ship *HMT Aragon* is struck by a torpedo from a German submarine in Alexandria Roads, Egypt. Many are rescued by *HMS Attack* until a torpedo blows her in half. Over 600 people, including volunteer nurses, are killed.

**31 December 1917** The Volunteer Army on the Don agrees to be commanded by General Kornilov.

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