

**Armistice Day** is commemorated every year on [11 November](#) to mark [the armistice](#) signed between the [Allies of World War I](#) and [Germany](#) at [Compiègne, France](#) at 5:45 am,<sup>[1]</sup> for the cessation of hostilities on the [Western Front of World War I](#), which took effect at eleven o'clock in the morning—the "eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month" of 1918. But, according to Thomas R. Gowenlock, an intelligence officer with the US First Division, shelling from both sides continued for the rest of the day, only ending at nightfall. The armistice initially expired after a period of 36 days and had to be extended several times. A formal peace agreement was only reached when the [Treaty of Versailles](#) was signed the following year.

The Allied powers signed a ceasefire agreement with Germany at Rethondes, France, at 11:00 a.m. on **November 11**, 1918, bringing the war now known as World War I to a close.

President Wilson proclaimed the first Armistice Day the following year on November 11, 1919, with these words: *“To us in America, the reflections of Armistice Day will be filled with solemn pride in the heroism of those who died in the country’s service and with gratitude for the victory, both because of the thing from which it has freed us and because of the opportunity it has given America to show her sympathy with peace and justice in the councils of the nations...”* Originally, the celebration included parades and public meetings following a two-minute suspension of business at 11:00 a.m.