

The History of
Greece and Her Neighbors in Historic Postcards:
1895-1920

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by
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Table of Contents

The Postcard as a Historical Document

1. Greece at the Turn of the 20th Century
2. Crete
3. The Central and Northern Balkans
4. The Ottoman Empire and Turkey
5. Northern Greece
6. The Balkan Wars
7. World War I

This postcard, addressed to a young woman named Mademoiselle de Baye and mailed from Moscow to Paris in 1895, is a good example of the regular postcards used for mailing messages in the late 19th century. It was a small step from printed emblems like the Russian crest in the upper left hand corner to the addition of more creative images.

The Postcard as a Historical Document

Between 1895 and 1920, the political map of Europe and western Asia was completely transformed. The Ottoman Empire and the Austro-Hungarian Empire were swept away. Czarist Russia was replaced by Communists. Greece doubled its territory. Many new countries were created, and others changed their borders dramatically. World War I was fought and completed, fanning the flames of suspicion and frustration that would color the rest of the century. Southeast Europe, a multi-ethnic and multi-lingual region with untapped natural resources, repeatedly pushed and pulled between East and West, occupied the center of the stage and played a decisive historical role during this period.

Enter the picture postcard!

In a region where on-the-spot reporters and blow-by-blow newscasting were far in the future, the postcard played a role in the dissemination of images that it would never play again. Thousands of photographs and drawings were made exclusively for postcard use, never to be printed anywhere else. Private one-of-a-kind photos were routinely printed on postcard stock and mailed or given away or saved as souvenirs. Postcards were made everywhere that news was happening. They recorded the images of the monuments, the streets, the people, and the events, both great and small. Governments issued postcards as propaganda, travelers made them as reminders of an exotic journey, photographic studios made them as casual or formal portraits, and commercial factories printed them as a source of profit.

Today, the postcards of the late 19th and early 20th centuries provide a unique record of the history of a dynamic period when the modern world began.

1. Greece at the Turn of the 20th Century

Between 1895 and 1920, Greece added Crete, Macedonia, part of Epirus, Thessaly, and many Aegean islands to its territory. It remained largely an agricultural country, with shipping, tourism, and some limited manufacturing adding to the economy. The government was a constitutional monarchy, but the balance of power between King and Parliament was tested several times during this period.

1.1. George I

George I, King of the Hellenes, was elected sovereign by the Greek National Assembly in 1863. He ruled for half a century, until he was assassinated in 1913. Ironically, he was killed at the height of his popularity, just after Greece had defeated the Ottoman Empire in the First Balkan War. He was succeeded by his son Constantine I.

1.2. Athens, Capital of Greece

In 1907, five years after this card was mailed, Greece recorded a population of a little over two and a half million persons. The largest city was Athens, shown here in a photograph taken from the Acropolis. Early postcards like this one put all the text on the side with the illustration, reserving the back for the address.

1.3. Greek Coins

The drachma was the Greek unit of currency, and it was divided into 100 lepta. A stamp to mail a postcard locally cost 2 lepta (less than half a U.S. cent). This French-language card illustrating Greek coins and giving their equivalents in other currencies was designed for travelers.

1.4. Camels in Greece

In the early 20th century, many parts of Greece were rugged and sparsely inhabited. Transportation could be difficult, and camels were still being used in some places. This caravan was photographed near Amphissa.

1.5. A Grand Hotel

Visitors to Athens had a wide choice of accommodations. They could enjoy luxurious rooms, if they could afford them. This grand hotel was built on the coast at Phaleron, near the port of Piraeus.

1.6. The New Olympic Games

The ancient Olympic Games were revived in 1896 in order to promote good will between nations, and the first year's competition was held in Athens. The marathon race, won by a Greek shepherd named Spyridon Loues, provided a fitting victory for the host country. Greece built a new and modern stadium for the international event, and it was used for the track and field events.

1.7. Olympic Stadium in 1906

In 1906, the four-year cycle of competitions was broken in order to hold games in Greece for a second time. This card shows the stadium during the competition.

1.8. Dancers from Megara

A group of five dancers wear the traditional costume of Megara. Each region in Greece had its own style of costume, inherited from the Medieval period. This card was mailed in 1916.

1.9. A Woman from Corfu

The traditional woman's costume from Corfu was especially elaborate. The elegant, long-sleeved blouse was decorated with intricate embroidery that required many months to complete.

1.10. Modern Fashions

Greece was a modern European country, and women wore the latest fashions. The colorful "traditional" female dress was only used for special occasions. This studio

photograph, printed on postcard stock so it could be mailed if desired, was made on the island of Syros and sent to Athens.

1.10b. Reverse of the Card

The inscription on the back of this card demonstrates the widespread popularity of postcard stock for printing studio photographs. It has the words “Post Card” in 14 different languages at the upper left.

1.11. A Man in a Fleece Coat

On a card made before 1907, a man from Attica poses in front of a painted backdrop for this portrait that shows off his fleece coat.

1.12. Patras

Houses in Patras, like most towns and cities in Greece, used red tile roofs.

1.13. The Port of Piraeus

Piraeus was a busy seaport with many modern buildings in 1909 when this card was mailed. Stamps could be placed either on the front or on the back.

1.14. The Chamber of Deputies in Athens

The Neoclassical style of architecture was favored by both Greek architects and their patrons in the late 19th and the early 20th centuries. Important buildings in Athens usually employed its fashion. This is the building used by the government’s Chamber of Deputies, the Greek Parliamentary body.

1.15. Happy New Year

The Neoclassical Style greatly influenced graphic design and popular imagery, as one can see from this sentimental Athenian New Year’s postcard with the caption “Good Luck for

1907.” The photograph was printed in a studio, and the color was added by hand to enhance the image.

1.16. Happy Valentine’s Day

Postcards were good vehicles for holiday greetings. A little boy holding candy, suggesting Cupid, decorates a card mailed from Athens to Beirut in 1906.

1.17. The Countryside

A view from the Acropolis across the precinct of Hadrian’s temple to Olympian Zeus shows the many fields that surrounded the tiny city of Athens.

1.18. The Acropolis

The Acropolis has always been a favorite photographic subject. On this card, it rises in the distance as a few people stroll down one of Athens’ wide avenues. The white strip at the right of the card was reserved for the sender’s message.

1.19. The Precinct of Olympian Zeus

Both tourists and scholars traveled to Greece to see its ancient monuments. The Athenian precinct dedicated to Olympian Zeus was excavated by F. Penrose in 1883-1886. Archaeological work continued in the area between the late 1880s and the early years of the new century by the Archaeological Society of Athens.

1.20. The Parthenon

In the early 20th century, the surface of the Acropolis had already been excavated all the way to bedrock, and the sacred hill was a major tourist attraction. The Parthenon’s north colonnade was not yet reconstructed.

1.21. Mycenae

Mycenae, the legendary home of King Agamemnon, was the most important Bronze Age city of Greece. The “Lion Gate” is shown as it was left after the excavations of Heinrich

Schliemann in the 1870s. Later, the missing block at the upper left would be found and re-inserted in its original place.

1.22. Corinth

A view of Corinth shows scaffolding inside the Temple of Apollo, which was having conservation work at the time the photograph was taken. The card was mailed to New York in 1911.

1.23. Olympia

Stereoscopes to view photographs in three dimensions used pairs of images taken from slightly different angles, and the user looked at a different image with each eye. The idea of making postcards that could be viewed this way was an interesting experiment, but it never became popular. This pair of views shows the entrance to the stadium for the ancient Olympic games.

1.24. Pylos

The Bay of Navarino and the town of Pylos are shown in this early photograph.

1.25. A Revolution in Transportation

The French dirigible “Ville de Paris” was one of the many experimental dirigibles that were being developed for regular passenger routes in the early 20th century. Speculators hoped that large profits would come from fleets of the lighter-than air flying machines that would link all parts of Europe.

1.26. The Wreck of a Dirigible

The twisted remains of a dirigible wrecked on the banks of the Axios River near Thessaloniki testify to the reason why dirigible traffic never met the high expectations of its promoters. This card was mailed from Greece on July 1, 1916.

1.27. Steamships in Piraeus

The construction of new steamships began moving at an unprecedented pace in the years after 1900. This photographic postcard, mailed in 1906, shows what was becoming a common site in the port of Piraeus.

1.28. The “Averof”

More than merchant ships were built. Especially under the administration of Prime Minister Eleftherios Venizelos as he prepared for the conflict that would free Greek lands still held by the Ottoman Empire, Greece built up a modern navy. The warship “Averof,” a heavy cruiser, was launched in 1912.

1.29. The Acropolis

2. Crete

Safe Mediterranean sea lanes to the Suez Canal were an important European issue in the 1890s, and the island of Crete, still a part of the Ottoman Empire, was a popular stopping point for vessels traveling to and from the Canal. With Crete in rebellion in 1896 and 1897, war and the disruption it would cause seemed imminent. Greece sent soldiers to the island, and an international force from Austria-Hungary, Germany, France, Great Britain, Italy, and Russia soon arrived as well. The Sultan was powerless against this united front. Greece, Austria-Hungary, and Germany soon withdrew, leaving the other countries to control the volatile situation. When local Ottoman forces rose up against the foreign armies, and some English soldiers were killed, a decision was reached quickly. Crete was declared independent, and all Ottoman units were told to leave. As a token to the Sultan, the foreign powers declared that Crete would be forbidden from joining politically with Greece. The foreign troops stayed to guarantee the new status.

2.1. Lowering the Ottoman Flag

On the 13th of November, 1898, French Soldiers lowered the Ottoman Empire’s flag in the castle at Ierapetra and declared Crete independent.

2.2. The Foreign Occupation of Crete

Soldiers from the “Great Powers” remained in Crete to guarantee its independence and maintain order. Italians were stationed in Chania, the Russians were in Rethymnon, the English were responsible for Herakleion, and the French occupied Sitia.

2.3. Crete’s Capital City

Chania had been the capital of Crete since the middle of the 19th century. This card, mailed in 1905 from an Italian post office in Crete, depicts the Chania waterfront and one of the city’s mosques.

2.4. Shipping by Sea

Crete was an important trans-shipment point for maritime traffic. This card shows the harbor at Chania.

2.5. Herakleion

Candia (Herakleion), in the center of Crete, was already an important city. This view is from before 1907.

2.6. The High Commissioner

Prince George, son of the Greek king, was appointed High Commissioner of Crete to govern the island. He arrived in Chania and began his term on December 9, 1898.

2.7. A Joyous Welcome in Herakleion

Large and enthusiastic crowds greeted the first visit of Prince George to Candia (Herakleion) in 1899. This is the reception committee for his arrival on the dock.

2.8. The Honor Guard for the High Commissioner

Prince George’s official honor guard wore uniforms based on traditional Cretan dress, including high, white Cretan boots.

2.9. The Parade for Prince George

A parade was part of the welcoming ceremony in Herakleion. Crete was an independent country, but the slogan on the wooden arch erected for the celebration says “Zeto e Enosis” (“Long Live Union with Greece”), leaving no doubts about the ultimate goals of the new nation.

2.10. Armed Guarantees

Flags and banners could create a festive occasion, but the armed soldiers lining the streets were also a very visible reminder that violence would not be tolerated in the new Cretan state ruled by Prince George.

2.11. English Soldiers in Crete

The foreign army units in Crete maintained a strong show of force, and no Ottoman army attacked the newly independent country.

2.12. Village Life

Many Cretans lived in small villages. Hagia Deka, south of Herakleion, used a Roman sarcophagus for its public fountain.

2.13. Agriculture in Crete

A Muslim farmer in Crete uses a pair of oxen to plow his field.

2.14. The Postal Service

Cretan mailmen wore uniforms and traveled by foot, by horse, or by bicycle, depending on the route.

2.15. Fashions in the Cities

In 1905, a photographer could print his pictures on postcard stock and tint them with color by hand, proving his customer with unique images for them to send through the mails. This example was made in Crete.

2.16. The Public Square of Moires

The town of Moires, in south-central Crete, was a busy place on market day.

2.17. The Beach at Siteia

Northern Europeans (at the left) stand on the sandy beach at Siteia, a small city in eastern Crete that was difficult to reach by land but it had a busy harbor.

2.18. Archaeology in Crete

Excavations in Crete were an international collaboration. At Knossos, the British archaeologist Sir Arthur Evans uncovered an important palace, which he dubbed the Palace of King Minos. The palace's west court, shown here, was later filled in so that the early houses below its surface are no longer visible.

2.19. The Museum in Herakleion

Crete's ancient history was revealed by a succession of excavations that filled the island's museums with art objects and artifacts. The "snake goddess" figurines in the case in the foreground were found at Knossos.

2.20. The Royal Sussex Regiment

Drummers of the Royal Sussex Regiment posed with their drums and their goat mascot for the photographer R. Behaeddin, creating a memorable postcard they could mail home from Crete.

2.21. Prince George

Prince George's rule began optimistically, but a failure to move toward union with Greece and an authoritarian tendency caused widespread dissatisfaction by 1905.

2.22. Revolution in 1905

Armed insurrection against Prince George broke out in 1905. Armed bands gathered at several rallying points to press their demands. This small group convened at Therissos.

2.23. Revolutionaries at Neapolis

The “Great Powers” arbitrated the disagreement before any violence occurred. They ordered Prince George to resign, and they agreed to move toward more self-rule.

2.24. A New Administration Begins

After the resignation of Prince George, the King appointed Alexander Zaimis, an experienced and able statesman, to serve as High Commissioner of Crete. He arrived in Chania on the 31st of October, 1906.

2.25. Alexander Zaimis

The official portrait of Zaimis, in a modern business suit, contrasts significantly with the regal official portraits of Prince George.

2.26. The Civil Guard

On October 13, 1907, a little over a year after Zaimis took office, Crete established its first unit of the Civil Guard, a local militia that would soon develop into a serious army so that Cretans could feel foreign troops were no longer necessary for the island’s defense.

2.27. British Troops

While the Civil Guard trained, the foreign soldiers continued to remain in Crete, but they promised to leave as soon as it was safe to do so.

2.28. Visit to Candia

On October 17, 1907, Zaimis visited Candia (Herakleion) where he was greeted by an honor guard of British soldiers.

2.29. Reception for Alexander Zaimis

Because Zaimis made no secret of his desire to unite Crete with Greece, he was received with honor and acclaim everywhere he went.

2.30. The Demonstration of 26 September, 1908

Reacting to a unilateral declaration of independence from the Ottoman Empire by Bulgaria, Cretans held a mass meeting and voted to end their own constitution and unite with Greece. The Greek Parliament, however, refused to accept the proclamation because it feared it would bring immediate war.

2.31. Departure of the Foreign Soldiers

By 1909, the Cretans had a stable government and a capable Civil Guard. Between the 13th and the 26th of July, British troops departed from the island and left Crete to the Cretans.

2.32. Lowering the British Flag

By the time the foreign troops lowered their flag and left Crete, the islanders were already electing annual representatives to the Greek Chamber of Deputies, but they were refused seating each year.

2.33. The Cretan Deputies

In 1911, the Cretans again elected Deputies to the Greek parliamentary body, but Prime Minister Venizelos was not yet ready for armed confrontation with the Sultan. When the rejected Cretans posed for this postcard, they had no way of knowing they would be the last group to be refused. By the next year, Venizelos had completed his coalition against the Ottoman Turks, and he was ready for war.

3. The Central and Northern Balkans

By the Treaty of Berlin of 1878, Romania, Serbia, Montenegro, and Bulgaria became independent or almost independent small nations, while Austria-Hungary gained administrative rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The other northern Balkan states,

Slovenia and Croatia, were self-governing but within the Austro-Hungarian Empire. In 1908, Bulgaria declared itself fully independent and Austria-Hungary annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina. When World War ended in 1918, the map was redrawn. The Austro-Hungarian Empire no longer existed. Romania and Bulgaria were larger, Albania was independent, and the other Balkan divisions were united within Yugoslavia.

3.1. Map of the Northern Balkans

3.2. Assassination in Serbia

King Alexander and Queen Draga of Serbia were murdered in June of 1903 in a *coup d'etat* that brought King Peter to the throne. The event was highly significant because Alexander had been pro-Austria while Peter was anti-Austria and pro-Russia. Hatred between Serbia and Austria would rapidly escalate, especially after Austria annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1908; the mutual animosity would start World War I eleven years after the assassination.

3.3. Peter I of Serbia

Peter had ambitions for a greater Serbia that would make it a dominant force in Eastern Europe. When Austria annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina, he was incensed because it prevented Serbia's own expansion, and his government actively opposed Austrian policies at every opportunity.

3.4. Serbian Coins

Travelers to Serbia could purchase this postcard to keep track of the currency and its foreign exchange rates. One Serbian dinar was worth 100 para.

3.5. Albania

Albania, southwest of Serbia, had a rugged landscape. It was neutral during the Balkan wars, but its independence was proclaimed in 1913.

3.6. Gypsy Musical Group

The Serbian-Hungarian gypsy group called “Maros” issued this advertising postcard in 1905 when it went on tour in Germany. The musicians described themselves as an “instrumental, singing, and dancing troupe.”

3.7. Franz-Joseph Plaz

Before World War I, Croatia was in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Franz-Joseph Plaz in Zagreb, the capital of Croatia, was named after the Emperor. It is shown in 1902.

3.8. A Croatian Hero

Count Joseph Jellachic, a pro-Austrian statesman whose equestrian monument is shown in a 1903 photograph, was governor of Croatia in the mid-19th century. He was regarded as a hero by Austrian sympathizers.

3.9. A Musical Group

A Croatian band composed entirely of musicians playing stringed instruments advertised their ensemble with this card issued before 1907.

3.10. A Croatian Costume

A young man poses in a colorful costume on this card made in Zagreb.

3.11. King Nicholas I of Montenegro

The treaty of Berlin gave Montenegro independence from the Ottoman Empire in 1878, under the rule of Prince Nicholas I, who had been the local chief administrator of the Ottoman province since 1860. In 1910, Nicholas changed his title from Prince to King. He was deposed in 1918, and Montenegro’s efforts to remain independent were unsuccessful. It became a part of Yugoslavia.

3.12. Women of Montenegro

3.13. Bosnian Street Scene

A Greek drink vendor living in Sarajevo is shown selling his wares on this Bosnian postcard.

3.14. Herzegovina Costumes

As in other regions of the Balkan Peninsula, the women of Herzegovina had traditional costumes inherited from earlier times.

3.15. Romania

King Carol I of Romania (1866-1914) became the first king of Romania when the Treaty of Berlin recognized the new country in 1878. He set about improving the economy of his new land.

3.16. A New Ship

Princess Maria of Romania christens a new ship on the 1st of July, 1898.

4. The Ottoman Empire and Turkey

By the early 20th century, the Ottoman Empire was under extreme pressures from several factors: the power of ancient traditions; the challenge of Western culture and democracy; drains on the budget from the increasingly high cost of maintaining a union of disparate peoples, many of whom did not wish to be in the Empire; a rising tide of Turkish nationalism; religious and secular concerns; and a demand from all sides for economic and social reforms.

4.1. Women in Constantinople

This postcard, with a Western woman dressed in red among women in traditional Muslim dress, some veiled and others unveiled, symbolizes the clash between cultures in Ottoman Turkey at the beginning of the 20th century.

4.2. The Bosphorus

Constantinople (officially re-named Istanbul in 1930), the capital of the Byzantine Empire, was built on the Bosphorus, a narrow strait at the north of the Sea of Marmara that joins the Aegean to the Black Sea. Access to this important and strategic position played an important role in the political maneuvering of southeast Europe and western Asia for several centuries.

4.3. Trade by Sea

Ships of all nations frequented the ports of the Ottoman Empire. This is Smyrna, a city with a large Greek population.

4.4. Anadolu Castle

The Empire of the Ottoman Turks was an Islamic religious state that began in 1288. The Ottomans built Anadolu Castle on the Asian side of the Bosphorus, north of Constantinople, in 1390.

4.5. Rumeli Castle

In 1452, the Ottomans added Rumeli Castle on the European side of the Bosphorus across from Anadolu Castle so they could block the narrowest point of the strait and prevent shipping from coming in from the Black Sea. The blockade was an important strategy in the conquest of Constantinople the following year.

4.6. Constantinople

At its largest extent, the Ottoman Empire included Turkey, the Syro-Palestinian region, Cyprus, the Dodecanese, Egypt and other parts of North Africa, Iraq, Crete and the Aegean Islands, the Balkan Peninsula, and part of Hungary and Russia. The Empire was ruled by a Sultan from his capital at Constantinople (the later Istanbul).

4.7. Mohammed V

Sultan Mohammed V was placed on the throne of the Ottoman Empire in 1909, at the age of 65, when his brother was deposed.

4.8. A Large Population

For much of its seven centuries, the Ottoman Empire was the largest political state in the world. It spanned three continents – Asia, Europe, and Africa – with a strategic location that controlled the trade between them. Trade routes were instrumental in its power, as they would be in the expansion of powerful neighbors who played roles in its decline.

4.9. Street Vendor in Beirut

A drink vendor sells a beverage called “Anis Gallia” in the city of Beirut.

4.10. Saint Sophia

Between 532 and 537, the Byzantine Emperor Justinian built the church of Saint Sophia, shown here rising behind an Egyptian obelisk erected by the Emperor Theodosius. After the Ottoman conquest, the church became a mosque and received minarets and other additions.

4.11. The Mosque of Süleyman I

The Mosque of Süleyman the Magnificent in Constantinople was built between 1550 and 1557.

4.12. A Bakery

Two men sell pita bread in the coastal city of Smyrna, on a table supported by stones.

4.13. Pottery Repair

This man in Damascus made his living repairing pieces of pottery and porcelain.

4.14. Caravans

Donkeys and Camels were important beasts of burden in the Ottoman Empire. Trade that could not go by ship was transported overland by caravans.

4.15. Damascus

The city of Damascus, the capital of Syria, was a part of the Ottoman Empire from 1516 until 1918. This card shows one of the city's gates.

4.16. A Turkish Wagon

A fancy wagon pulled by oxen was photographed about 1910. The many bells on the animals would announce the wagon's arrival over a great distance.

4.17. Water Taxis

For a small fee, one could hire a boat with an awning to keep its passengers out of the hot sun.

4.18. The Top-Hané Fountain

A majority of the population in the Ottoman Empire was Islamic, and fountains for washing before prayer were numerous. This one was built in Constantinople.

4.19. Dervish Musicians in Constantinople

4.20. Tripoli

War between Italy and the Ottoman Empire erupted in 1911 over Italian claims to Tripoli in North Africa. The Italian army occupied Rhodes and other islands as well as the last Ottoman possessions in Africa, and the Empire's military weakness was displayed for all to see.

4.21. Italian Customs House and Post Office in Rhodes

Rhodes was ceded formally to Italy after World War I (it did not become a part of Greece until after the Second World War).

5. Northern Greece

Most of northern Greece was still in the Ottoman Empire in 1900. Thessaloniki was the largest and most important city. It had been captured by the Ottoman Empire in 1430, and it remained the capital of an Ottoman vilayet until 1912. It was already a center of commerce in the 19th century, and its port was busy with ships from many nations.

5.1. Street Scene in Thessaloniki

Macedonia had many reminders of its Greek and Roman past, like this Roman triumphal arch which still stood over a modern street in the early 20th century.

5.2. Street Scene in Thessaloniki

5.3. The “White Tower” was a prominent landmark for ships approaching Thessaloniki from the sea.

5.4. The Traditional Male Costume in Epirus

Eastern Epirus became a part of Greece in 1881, but the western part remained in the Ottoman Empire until 1919.

5.5. Cretan Freedom Fighters in Epirus

Epirus had several unsuccessful revolutions before World War I. Its independence movement attracted this volunteer unit of Cretans who went to northwest Greece to assist with the revolution. The postcard photograph was taken before the unit left Crete.

5.6. Corfu

The Greek island of Corfu is situated off the Albanian coast in the northern Ionian Sea. It had been conquered by Venice in 1386 and held by them until 1797, and it was ruled for a time by Britain before it became a part of modern Greece in 1864. The harbor scene was mailed in 1905.

5.7. Mademoiselle Penelope

The attractive Mademoiselle Penelope had this postcard of herself made on Corfu in April of 1904 so she could mail it to Athens.

5.8. Jewish Costume

Thessaloniki had a large Jewish population whose young women, like other members of the international population of the city, were proud of their traditional festival costumes.

5.9. Young Gypsy Mother

Many ethnic minorities moved into northern Greece during the long centuries of Ottoman domination. This young Romanian gypsy, standing beside her family's tent and holding her baby, lived in Macedonia.

5.10. Macedonian Freedom Fighters

In addition to a minority who wished to remain Ottoman, some of the population of Macedonia wanted independence and autonomy, some favored union with Bulgaria, and the largest group wished union with Greece. After 1903, several revolutionary forces, including a group of Cretans whose commander is shown here, fought in the Macedonian war for independence.

5.11. This anti-Greek propaganda postcard, printed in Thessaloniki under Ottoman rule, shows a group of guerrilla fighters. The caption, in French, calls them "brigands."

5.12. Mohammed V Lands at Thessaloniki

Sultan Mohammed V made a state visit to the Ottoman possessions in Europe in 1911. He landed at Thessaloniki on June 9 with great pomp and ceremony, and he then traveled north to Kosovo to encourage support for the Empire.

5.13. Market Square

This view of a street market in Thessaloniki includes two boys getting a drink from a fountain at the left and a one-legged war veteran at the right.

5.14. The Great Fire

On August 17, 18, and 19, 1917, a great fire raged out of control in Thessaloniki, destroying two thirds of the city and leaving over a hundred thousand people without shelter.

5.15. The Cathedral district after the great fire.

5.16. Blessing the Waters

The Orthodox Christian ceremony of the blessing of the waters is performed on Epiphany Day (January 6). The celebration in Thessaloniki is shown on this card mailed in 1917, after the city became a part of Greece. The Greek flag is proudly displayed on the small boat at the left.

6. The Balkan Wars

At the beginning of the 20th century, the Ottoman Empire extended well into Europe. It included Macedonia, Albania, and much of the rest of the northern Balkans as far as the Austro-Hungarian border. In 1908, Bulgaria proclaimed its independence, and Austria-Hungary annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina, territories it had occupied since the Treaty of Berlin had given it partial administrative jurisdiction over them in 1878. The Ottoman Empire was powerless to stop these changes. Desires for independence continued to mount, and by 1912 a coalition had been formed by Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia, and Montenegro to unite their forces in order to free the remaining European territory still in the Empire.

6.1. The Balkan Alliance

The personification of Greece points the way for the Kings of Bulgaria, Serbia, Montenegro, and Romania as they charge toward fleeing Ottoman soldiers on a propaganda postcard printed in Bulgaria for the First Balkan War.

6.2. The Battle of Urush Tepe

After a battle between Bulgarian and Ottoman forces near Urush Tepe, wounded soldiers lie in front of stacked rifles.

6.3. Bulgarian Canons

Bulgarian artillery units played an important role in the successful conduct of the First Balkan War.

6.4. The Siege of Adrianople

After initial victories against the Ottoman army in 1912, hostilities paused as the Balkan allies tried to negotiate a treaty. When the negotiations broke down, Bulgarian soldiers marched south and laid siege to Adrianople.

6.5. The Fortification “Aivaz-Baba”

Adrianople was protected by massive fortifications like this one.

6.6. Bulgarian Soldiers at Adrianople

The Bulgarian siege lasted from March 12 to 25, 1913. Finally, the city fell to the attackers.

6.7. The Fortification “Haiderlak Tatia”

These fortifications at Adrianople were captured by the Bulgarians.

6.8. Services for the Dead

Funeral services for the fallen Bulgarian soldiers were held after the city of Adrianople was captured.

6.9. Prisoners

Ottoman prisoners of war captured by the Bulgarians during the First Balkan War from the army of Emer Bey.

6.10. Adrianople after its Capture

Against a background of the city of Adrianople, this card shows insets of the defeated Shukri Pasha at the left and the victorious Bulgarian general Ivanov at the upper right.

6.11. Artillery Barracks

The Ottoman artillery barracks of Shukri Pasha are shown as they appeared before they were burned down by the Bulgarians in the Battle of Adrianople.

6.12. The Second Balkan War

The Second Balkan War broke out on June 29-30, 1913 over disagreements about the division of Ottoman territory. Greece, Serbia, and Romania fought against Bulgaria, and even the Ottoman Turks seized the opportunity to recapture Adrianople. On July 1, 1913, Greek forces captured the Bulgarian garrison at Thessaloniki, and the city became a part of Greece. The Treaty of Bucharest confirmed the situation later that year.

6.13. Romania

Romania was neutral in the First Balkan War, but in 1913 it joined Serbia and Greece and invaded Bulgaria, receiving new territory at the close of the war. On this card, King Carol I of Romania reviews his soldiers as they quietly cross the border into Bulgaria on foot and by bicycle.

6.14 and 6.15. Bulgarian and Ottoman Anger

Angered over the Balkan Wars, Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire sided with Germany and Austria during World War I. The Ottoman army attacked Russia, and Bulgaria invaded Serbia with the full force of its army.

7. World War I

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the Hapsburg dynasty in Austria became increasingly concerned about the expansion of Czarist Russia. Both Russia and Austria wanted a land corridor to the Mediterranean, and the Balkan Peninsula was the most easily available route. As a check against Russia's main Balkan ally Serbia, Austria annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1908. This act led to anti-Austrian feelings in the

occupied territories as well as to terrorism against Austrian interests and a strong anti-Austrian press in Serbia.

7.1. The Hapsburg Coat of Arms

7.2. Wilhelm I

Kaiser Wilhelm I ruled Germany between 1888 and 1918, building up its army and especially its navy to be the largest in the world. Germany's ultimate aims were kept secret.

7.3. Franz Joseph

In the early 20th century, the Emperor of Austria-Hungary was Franz Joseph. He actively opposed Russian expansion and its efforts to use its ally Serbia as an outlet to the Mediterranean.

7.4. Assassination of Francis Ferdinand

Archduke Francis Ferdinand, heir to the throne of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, was assassinated in Sarajevo on June 28, 1914. Serbian involvement in the attack was suspected, and Austria presented Serbia with an ultimatum bearing several anti-terrorist demands. When Serbia accepted only part of the ultimatum, Austria declared war.

7.5. The Parade in Sarajevo

This card shows the June 28, 1914 parade in Sarajevo, with views taken only a few moments before the assassination.

7.6. World War I Begins

Austrian soldiers crossed the Drina River in September, 1914, in the invasion of Serbia that started World War I. This postcard shows the crossing.

7.7. Austrian Submarine

The network of international alliances soon divided Europe between the Central Powers (Austria-Hungary, Germany, Bulgaria, and Turkey) and the Allied Powers (Britain, France, Russia, and Belgium). Germany and Austria began using their large submarine fleet to block Allied shipping.

7.8. German Field Artillery

The war had a curious blend of old, outmoded military strategies and new technologies. In this old-fashioned German unit, the artillery was pulled by horses and the colorful uniforms, especially the bright red collars, made easy targets.

7.9. Warships in the Bosphorus

With Turkey fighting Russia in the Caucasus, Austria and Germany decided to open up a land route to Constantinople to provide the Ottoman Empire with arms and munitions that the Turks could then transport to the front by sea.

7.10. Bulgarian Soldiers in Serbia

Bulgaria, angered over the Second Balkan War, joined Austria-Hungary in the invasion of Serbia that was intended to link Berlin and Vienna with Constantinople.

7.11. Wartime Images

As Bulgarian troops advanced into Serbia, painters made official images like this one that were quickly turned into postcards to provide an eager public with news of the war.

7.12. Bulgarian Red Cross Card

In order to raise money for medical relief, the Bulgarian Red Cross sold this card showing soldiers crossing the Morava River in Serbia.

7.13. Retreating Serbian Soldiers

Austria and Bulgaria were highly successful at the start of the war, and their armies advanced rapidly. Serbian and Montenegrin forces retreated to the southeast through Albania to the Adriatic coast.

7.14. Refuge in Corfu

Corfu was a quiet Greek island before it received 100,000 Serbian and Montenegrin soldiers who fled before the advance of the Bulgarian and Austrian armies. Greece was neutral in the war, but it gave the soldiers sanctuary.

7.15. German and Austrian Propaganda

The Central Powers were elated over their victories at the beginning of the war, and they issued postcards like this example showing a German soldier spanking his cowering enemies.

7.16. The Smallest Canonier

7.17. British and French Propaganda

The personification of Liberty urges troops forward on this French propaganda postcard issued in 1915.

7.18. Flags of the Allies

7.19. Lord Kitchener

Britain was woefully unprepared at the start of World War I. Preparations for armed conflict were entrusted to Lord Kitchener, who was appointed Secretary of State for War. He reorganized the army and turned British manufacturing, which had always been a national strength, to preparations for war.

7.20. Machines Change War Forever

Belgium fought on the side of Britain and France. One of its (not very successful) experiments used dogs to pull heavy machine guns. By the end of the war, mechanization had transformed warfare, and animals were no longer considered useful as combat draft animals.

7.21. British and French Policy in the Dardanelles

The participation of the Ottoman Empire on the side of the Central Powers checked Russian advances on the eastern front, and Ottoman control of the Dardanelles and the Sea of Marmara prevented allied shipping from reaching the Black Sea to relieve Russia. With Bulgarian and Austrian forces still advancing in the Balkans, the Allies decided to boldly seize the Dardanelles in order to control the 40-mile stretch of water by using a naval landing to bypass the Balkans. On March 18, 1915, English and French ships unsuccessfully attacked Turkish positions in the Dardanelles, and they then landed an army on the Gallipoli Peninsula. After furious fighting, the opposing armies dug trenches, and the campaign continued without significant advances but with heavy casualties. In early 1916, the Allied army withdrew in defeat.

7.22. The Australian Expeditionary Force

Australian forces played a major role at Gallipoli, and they suffered heavy casualties.

7.23. British Propaganda

On this English postcard adapted from one of Aesop's fables, a stork dressed as Turkey receives little gratitude from a wolf dressed as Germany after the stork removed a bone stuck in the wolf's throat. The implication is that Turkey would not be rewarded for its victories at Gallipoli and elsewhere.

7.24. The Balkan Front

On October 5, 1915, French and British troops began arriving in northern Greece because they feared the Bulgarian army would march west through Thrace and Macedonia. This card shows the French command staff landing at Thessaloniki.

7.25. The French Camp

French soldiers in Thessaloniki lived in tents.

7.26. Artillery

Artillery pieces stationed at Thessaloniki were pulled by horses. This card shows a French unit.

7.27. Headquarters

Military units set up their own post offices for soldiers to send mail. This card, sent home by a French artilleryman, shows the building used as military headquarters in Thessaloniki.

7.28. A Soldier Poses

A real photograph, printed as a postcard, provides a momento to mail home. It was printed in Thessaloniki.

7.29. Greece in World War I

Greece was neutral at the beginning of the war, and its government was sharply divided. King Constantine favored Germany, while Prime Minister Venizelos favored England and France. The conflicting views eventually became so intense that Greece had two rival governments for a short period, one under the King in Athens and one under Venizelos in Thessaloniki. After Constantine left Greece and went into exile, Greece entered the war on the side of the Allies. Constantine I became King in 1913. He left Greece in 1917 because of his pro-German views but was restored in 1920. He abdicated in 1922 after his army was defeated in a campaign designed to add the coast of Anatolia to Greece.

7.30. Venizelist Soldiers in Thessaloniki

By 1917, most Greeks supported the Allies against Turkey and Bulgaria. Prime Minister Venizelos raised a large army, which trained in Thessaloniki. Greece entered the war and played a decisive role in helping to free Serbia and Montenegro.

7.31. Allied Flags

Greece joined a large number of countries, which had already entered the war against the Central Powers. This card was made just before Greece declared war.

7.32. British Advance into Jerusalem

Troops from the British Empire, including the Indian Lancers pictured here, entered Jerusalem and helped put an end to the Ottoman Empire.

7.33. The Aftermath: Turkey

After the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, Mustafa Kemal and the other members of the Committee of Young Turks successfully founded the new Turkish nation as a secular rather than a religious state.

7.34. The Aftermath: Yugoslavia

The creation of Yugoslavia is shown as a victorious white eagle breaking the standards of Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, Germany, and the Ottoman Empire.

7.35. The Aftermath: Greece

Between 1895 and 1920, Greece doubled its territory, modernized its industry, and successfully survived both external and internal conflicts.

7.36. The Greek Flag on a Postcard