



## **Does the peace that ended WW1 haunt us today?**

### **Introduction**

**Narrated by Bridget Kendall**

Filed away in a repository at the National Archives in West London are some of the founding documents of the modern world.

They were written at the end of the First World War – a conflict that turned the world upside down, destroyed whole Empires and gave birth to completely new countries.

It's extraordinary to think that the violence and trauma of 20<sup>th</sup>-century Europe, the escalating rivalry between Russia and the United States, and the turbulent modern history of the Middle East, all go back in some measure to decisions taken at this moment in history, nearly a hundred years ago.

This heavy volume is the Treaty of Versailles – the famous peace treaty which determined the fate of much of the globe at the end of the First World War.

As you can see it's quite battered as though it's been through the wars itself. And inside there are pages of detail which shaped much of the map of Europe, including the recognition of countries like Czechoslovakia and Poland.

But fascinating as this is as a piece of diplomacy, is it all now the stuff of dusty history books and archive vaults? Or does it still cast a shadow over the world today? Are we still haunted by the peace that ended World War One?

[Archive courtesy of La Camera Stylo, Bundesarchiv, 24 Frames Film, Pathe, Footage Farm, Kaleidoscope, BBC News]