

World War One

ILLUSTRATED

BOOKS!

A SPECIAL ISSUE
DEVOTED TO
REVIEWS,
OVERVIEWS,
GUIDES,
AND RESOURCES,
INCLUDING:

TOMLINSON BOOK PRIZE
AWARD WINNERS

REFERENCES

STRATEGIC STUDIES

BATTLES & CAMPAIGNS

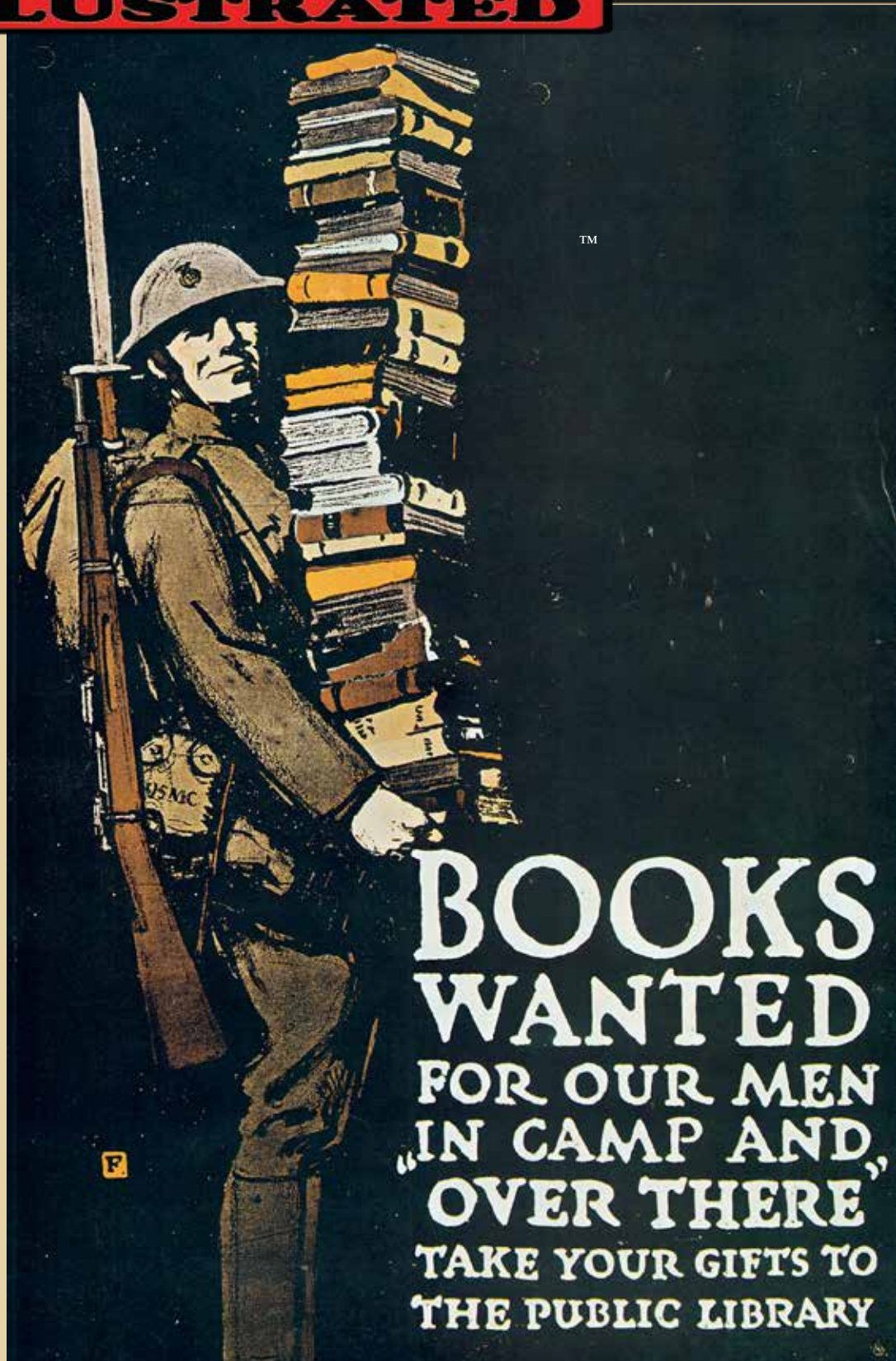
AVIATION & NAVAL

BIOGRAPHIES & UNIT
HISTORIES

FICTION

CULTURAL & SOCIAL

AND MORE!



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OVER THERE"
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BOOKS, BOOKS, BOOKS!

In order to try and keep up with the flood of new books on WW1, we decided to devote an entire issue to reviews of nearly 100 books that have appeared over the past several years. Two publishers in particular are worth noting as most of the new books are produced or distributed by them: Casemate and Osprey.

Casemate not only publishes its own titles but also distributes books by UK-based Pen and Sword and Helion.

Osprey is a WWOI sponsor and well known for its series of specialized soft cover books that focus on weapons, soldiers, and battles. Usually around 48-80 pages each, they include bibliographies (and sometimes archival sources), noted historians as authors, and a variety of color paintings that are unrivaled. Please support them!

All books are hard cover (also called hardbound or cloth) unless noted as "pb" for paperback next to the price. Almost all hard cover books are also available in paperback and eBook versions.

Dana Lombardy


Publisher

| | |
|--------------|--|
| Publisher | Dana Lombardy |
| Editors | Diane Rooney, Steven C. Suddaby, Randy Gaulke |
| Cartography | Philip Schwartzberg, Meridian Mapping |
| Images | U.S. Library of Congress |
| Illustrators | Jonathan Aguilon |
| Contributors | Bryan Alexander, David F. Beer, Richard F. Church, Jane M. Ekstam, Terrence Finnegan, James M. Gallen, Randy Gaulke, Edwin L. Kennedy, Jr., Dana Lombardy, Anne Merritt, Michael S. Neiberg, Len Shurtleff, Steve Suddaby, Chandar Sundaram, Jolie Velazquez |
| Layout | Dan Zillion |
| Logo Design | Rinck Heule |

ON THE COVER

This 1918 poster showing a U.S. Marine with a large stack of books was created by Charles Buckles Falls, a member of the Society of Illustrators, and one of many professional artists who made propaganda images for the wartime Division of Pictorial Publicity. The poster was the model for the Tomlinson Book Prize Award bronze plaque sculpted by Andrew L. Chernak, a U.S. Army Vietnam War veteran whose sculptures are installed at Arlington Cemetery and state and private parks around America: andrewchernak.com

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World War One Illustrated is published by the World War One Historical Association (WW1HA), a 501(c)(3) educational non-profit corporation. Editorial, business & advertising office: PMB 237, 2625 Alcatraz Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94705-2702 U.S.A. / 510-869-9941 / seniorED@ww1ha.org
Subscriptions (includes membership in WW1HA): \$50 per year for printed copies delivered via postal service, or \$40 for electronic digital downloads. UK printed subscription is \$65 for 4 printed copies of **WWOI**. Printed and PDF single copies of back issues can be ordered at ww1ha.org/shop
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Printed in the U.S.A.



There are several American-based World War One publications that we feel deserve your attention.

Michael Hanlon is a writer and tour guide who produces the monthly **worldwar1.com St.-Mihiel Trip-Wire** eNewsletter. Although the title refers to a well-known American battle, its focus is much broader with news and reports on all facets of World War One history, remembrance, and centennial events.

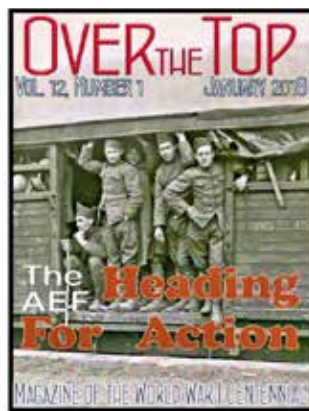
Trip-Wire is free and you can sign up here: greatwar@earthlink.net



Hanlon also compiles the daily *Roads to the Great War* Blog with contributions from various writers and sources. Here are sample posts from 20 June through 6 July:

- The Multiple Dangers of Shell Concussion;
- Remembering a USMC Veteran;
- Excerpts from a lecture by contrarian Andrew Bacevich;
- A short piece called Hymn of Hate about Ernst Lissauer's 1914 pro-Germany poem reprinted from Connie Ruzich's *Behind Their Lines* Blog;
- A chronology on French Prime Minister Georges Clemenceau's career;
- A candidate for Best Unknown General of the War (Felix von Bothmer);
- A review of the Tomlinson prize co-winner *Pershing's Crusaders* (also see page 4 of this issue of *WWOI*);
- WW1 Commemorative Brochures From the U.S. Army Center for Military History;
- The captain of the light cruiser *Emden* who reflects of the German naval disasters of 1914.

The *Roads to the Great War* blog is also free and you can sign up here: <http://roadstothegreatwar-ww1.blogspot.com/>



In addition to the above two digital newsletters, Hanlon is also the editor of the monthly electronic PDF *Over The Top: Magazine of the World War I Centennial*. 139 issues are available for \$4.50 each. Yearly 12-month compilations on CD cost \$32. A free sample issue and \$30 subscription form are available at:

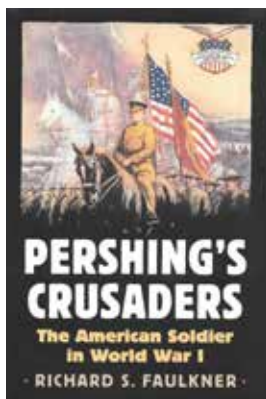
http://www.worldwar1.com/pdf/OVERTHETOP_SampleIssue.pdf



We also recommend *Over The Front*, the quarterly journal of the League of World War I Aviation Historians. Each 100-page issue is loaded with black & white photos and tables for articles on aircraft, aces, units, and more. There are also book reviews and color profile illustrations of aeroplanes. The front cover usually features a painting of an action scene.

Back issues and \$65 USA subscriptions that include League membership can be found here:

<https://overthefront.com>



**Pershing's Crusaders:
The American Soldier in
World War I**
By Richard S. Faulkner
University Press of Kansas, 2017
784 pages, 36 photos and images,
one table, index
ISBN 978-0-7006-2373-0 \$39.95



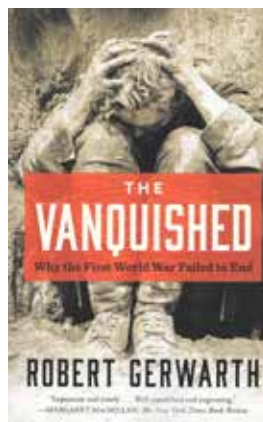
Richard Faulkner's incredible work on the doughboys of the American Expeditionary Forces (AEF) is imminently timely. ... an extremely well researched and detailed account written by an Army veteran and World War I scholar.... It is based on the models of Bell Irvin Wiley's *The Life of Johnny Reb* and *The Life of Billy Yank*, which makes it very readable and interesting...

Faulkner traces the steps of soldiers from their basic training until their discharge from active service. What should be readily apparent is that the two million men of the AEF had two million perspectives of their experiences. While there are commonalities, the reader finds that each doughboy experienced something different as units were formed, broken apart, reformed, deployed, retrained, committed to action, committed to occupation duty, and then redeployed in different situations. Amazingly, most of this happened in the span of just over two years.

The Herculean efforts to raise, train, deploy, operate, and redeploy a huge force on very short timelines is a tribute to American know-how and ingenuity. What is also apparent is the total unpreparedness of the U.S. Army to fight in a modern, industrialized war. Faulkner covers the "down-side" of the doughboys' experiences as well. The lack of trained leaders, the reliance on British and French trainers, the use of British and French armaments, and the complete unpreparedness to deal with chemical warfare are but a few of the issues covered....

Pershing's Crusaders superbly adds to the body of knowledge regarding American soldiers and marines in World War I.

Abridged from the book review by Lt. Col. Edwin L. Kennedy Jr., U.S. Army, Retired and is reprinted with the permission of *Military Review*, the Professional Journal of the US Army, Combined Arms Center, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. It was originally published in the June 2017 *Military Review Online Book Review*.



**The Vanquished:
Why the First World War
Failed to End**
By Robert Gerwarth
Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2016
446 pages, illustrations, maps,
index
ISBN 978-0-7006-2373-0 \$39.95
Times Literary Supplement
Best Book of 2016

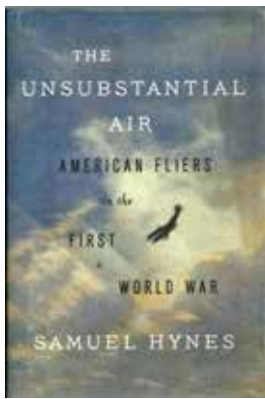


If it is true, as they say, that the victors write the history, then our understanding of World War I and the century that followed is at the very least incomplete. Take, for example, the seemingly basic question of when the war ended. The standard date—November 11, 1918—privileges the experiences of the victors, most notably France, Great Britain and the United States, all of which use it as a time for national holidays based on war memorialization.

At issue is more than simple semantics or the preferences of pedantic historians. ... Robert Gerwarth cites German veteran and writer of *Storm of Steel* Ernst Jünger, who said in 1928, "This war is not the end but the beginning of violence." Thus, we can understand the "First World War" as not having truly ended until at least 1945 or perhaps even 1991 when the Soviet Union, itself a product of the war, finally collapsed. Even discussing the war in terms of winners and losers misses the point. With the possible exception of the United States and Japan, all states came out of the war far worse off than when they went in—and the people of Europe knew it.

In his epilogue, Gerwarth notes that by the late 1930s only two of the new post-1918 states, Finland and Czechoslovakia, looked anything like the liberal democracies that were once supposed to be the basis of Europe's future. By 1939 there were, in fact, fewer people living under democracies than had been the case in 1914. Violence and dehumanization (with Jews as a particular target across central and eastern Europe) had become the norm in many of the new regimes. Thus does Gerwarth make clear the need to understand two often forgotten legacies of this period: that the process of ending World War I was just as traumatic as the war itself and that even in total wars, the vanquished still play a critical role.

Abridged from the review by Michael Neiberg published on October 4, 2017 on the *Lawfare: National Security and Law website lawfareblog.com*



**The Unsubstantial Air:
American Fliers in the First
World War**

By Samuel Hynes
Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2014
322 pages, photos, index
ISBN 978-0-374-27800-7 \$26.00

My initial impression of this book by its cover was pretty skeptical. Was it one more book about famous aces, rehashing the stories that have been told many times before? Was it one of the flood of books written quickly to cash in on the WW1 centennial? After reading just a couple dozen pages, however, I was pleasantly surprised at how wrong I had been. This is an incredibly insightful overview of what it was like to be an American pilot in the First World War. It is not simply a repeat of war stories. Using the writings of many individuals, Hynes describes the pilots' prewar lives, their civilian and military flight training, their reactions to living in foreign countries, their time in combat, and how their experiences affected their lives afterward if they survived.

The author takes full advantage of his experience as a young pilot in WW2 to describe what the WW1 young men went through and what they thought about it. This level of understanding enables him to share these insights with his readers.

One example among many will suffice to illustrate this. Hynes comments (p.212) on the common phenomenon of pilots being disgusted by their hometown newspapers' exaggerated accounts of

events in which they participated: "Pilots know that the newspaper version will miss the important details: the roles the other pilots on the patrol played, and what the Boche did, and the weather, and the way luck enters in, and fear, and nerves. Civilians won't get it right... And so pilots at the front withdraw into their pilots' world, where there are other young men like themselves who understand the contingencies of combat..."

One of the other joys of this book is how Hynes puts the actions and attitudes of these young pilots into their historical, cultural, and socio-economic contexts. In reading it, you start to understand for the first time how their views were shaped by such factors as contemporary concepts of manhood; an upper-class, Ivy League background (for many); grandfathers who were Civil War veterans; etc. Hynes submerges you in the American life of the turn of the last century and the result is fascinating.

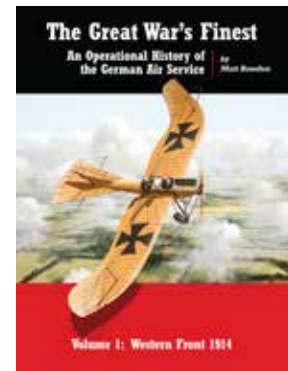
The raw material for this excellent book consists of the first-person writings of over 60 individual pilots. As I was reading, it occurred to me that a hundred writers could have started with the same raw material but that probably none of them would have interpreted it with the same insight and brilliance. Whether this will be your first exposure to World War One aviation or you've already read dozens of books on the subject, I can't recommend this highly enough.

Steve Suddaby, past president of WWIHA. This is only the second time he has awarded a book five stars on an Amazon.com review.

New York Times: "...both thrilling and poignant..."

The Washington Post: "A terrific book."

Kirkus Review: "...a marvelously fluid narrative."



**The Great War's Finest:
An Operational History of the
German Air Service, Volume I:
Western Front 1914**

By Matt Bowden
Aeronaut Books, 2017
378 pages, maps, tables, photos,
appendices, index
ISBN 978-1-935881-58-2 \$69.99 pb

The *Over the Front* review of this extraordinary new study described it as a "large-format volume with personal accounts and large-size color and black & white photos, as well as many clear charts [also in color] and multi-color maps."

Bowden's well-footnoted, well-organized tome utilizes primary sources, official publications, squadron histories, after-action reports, and memoirs, many never before published in English. It is much more than a summary of German aviation activities at the start of the war. The effective relationship between *Feldflieger Abteilungen* (Field Flying Sections) and the advancing armies is explained in the narrative and delineated in several orders-of-battle at key points during the 1914 campaign in the West.

The importance of the *Fliegertruppe* was not only in reconnaissance, but also in working closely with artillery batteries that contributed to the successes of the German armies during the Battle of The Frontiers. This book is highly recommended and future volumes are eagerly awaited.

*Reviewed by Dana Lombardy,
publisher of WWOI*



**The First Blitz:
Bombing London in the First
World War**

By Ian Castle

Osprey Publishing, 2015

208 pages, photos, artwork, maps,
appendices, index

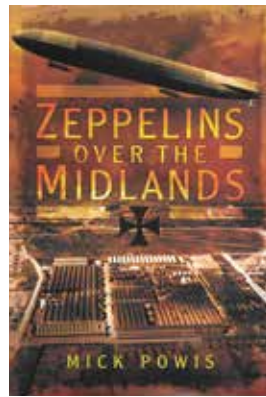
ISBN 978-1-4728-1529-3 \$19.95 pb

Ian Castle tells the story of the Zeppelin, Gotha, and Giant air raids on London in WW1. It is one of the best overviews in print, devoting a fair amount of attention to the raids' effects on the populace but also covering well all the other aspects of the topic.

The maps are beautiful and very helpful in guiding the reader. This reviewer walked the route taken by Heinrich Mathy's Zeppelin L13 on its devastating September 1915 raid and visited a number of other sites described in the text. The combination of Castle's descriptions, maps, and Christa Hook's paintings gets the reader quite close to being on the sites themselves.

Osprey reprinted and updated two of Castle's earlier works to create this single volume. *London 1914-17: The Zeppelin Menace* and *London 1917-18: The Bomber Blitz*. If you have neither or only one of them, however, this book is well worth reading. The use of footnotes would have improved this history, but that is a small complaint about this work that is otherwise exceptional.

Reviewed by Steve Suddaby, past president of WW1HA



Zeppelins Over the Midlands

By Mick Powis

Pen and Sword, 2016

206 pages, maps, photos, appendix,
index

ISBN 978-1-4738-3419-4 \$39.95

The author's approach is to make the single massive nine-airship raid of 31 January 1916 the center of a broader history by following the crews, their airships, and the targeted cities and towns through the war and beyond. The author's grandmother and mother narrowly survived this raid, prompting Powis to devote years of research to this book. His appendix listing those killed is probably the first time that all their names have been published in one place.

Mick Powis's meticulous work and unique insights are impressive to a reviewer who has studied the Zeppelin raids for almost 25 years. For example, his study of the pattern of bomb strikes shows conclusively that Zeppelins did hover to drop their bombs if weather and a lack of anti-aircraft guns allowed it. He created maps from multiple sources that showed the path of each of the nine Zeppelins, often correcting errors in Britain's official history, *The War in the Air*. Unfortunately, the maps as printed almost require a magnifying glass to read the town names, a minor annoyance in an otherwise excellent book.

Reviewed by Steve Suddaby, past president of WW1HA



**The Last Flight of the L31: The True
Story of the Potters Bar Zeppelin
The Last Flight of the L32: The True
Story of the Billericay Zeppelin**

By R.L. Rimell

Albatros Productions (Windsock Datafile
Special series), 2016

24 pages, photos & drawings in B&W and
color, appendices

L31: ISBN 978-1-906798-47-5 £10

L32: ISBN 978-1-906798-47-2 £10

www.windsockdatafilespecials.co.uk

Ray Rimell's two books on Zeppelins include an astounding wealth of new information and photographs. These two Zeppelins were shot down a week apart over England in 1916 and ended the lives of two of the Germany Navy's most capable airship commanders, Heinrich Mathy and Werner Petersen.

The two slim monographs discuss the careers of Mathy and Peterson, the missions of L31 and L32, their demise in September and October 1916, the British pilots who brought down the airships, the sites where they fell, and what happened to the remains of the Zeppelin crews.

Both footnoted books are profusely illustrated with photographs (many new to this reviewer), color and B&W artwork and aircraft sketches, as well as WW1-era postcards that present a cultural view of how British and German civilians perceived the Zeppelin raids. Appendices include sources and suggestions for places to visit in England that preserve the histories of the L31 and L32.

Reviewed by Steve Suddaby, past president of WW1HA. In the 1990s he interviewed survivors of Zeppelin attacks and walked the paths of two of Heinrich Mathy's raids.



**Billy Bishop VC Lone Wolf Hunter:
The RAF Ace Re-Examined**

By Peter Kilduff

Grub Street Publishing, 2014

192 pages, two maps, color drawings,
photos, appendix, index

ISBN 978-1-909808-13-3 \$39.95

Available in the U.S. through Casemate
Publishers

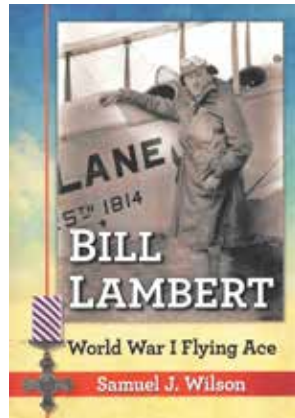
Peter Kilduff is recognized as an authority on WW1 aviation and the Red Baron (Manfred von Richthofen) in particular. As an expert on German records, Kilduff describes what the German records say and don't say regarding each of Bishop's 72 aerial victories.

The German aviation records are incomplete due to WW2 aerial bombing, others were lost or didn't make it into WW1 records, and some are too vague for verifying particular aerial combats.

It quickly becomes clear, however, that no conclusions about the veracity of a victory claim by Bishop or anyone else is possible simply because of a lack of German records regarding that event. This is not a hagiography, however. Kilduff points out that Bishop "inflated" the drama of his combats in his letters home and "embellished" his stories in later years.

Billy Bishop VC contains all of the qualities that have made Peter Kilduff's biographies such outstanding works. This is an indispensable work for anyone seeking to understand Billy Bishop's story.

Steve Suddaby, past president
WW1HA



**Bill Lambert:
World War I Flying Ace**

By Samuel J. Wilson

McFarland & Company, 2016

266 pages, photos, appendix, index

ISBN 978-1-4766-6467-5 \$39.95 pb

American born Lambert apparently went to Canada in late 1915 and tried to enlist, but instead became a chemist making explosives in a factory. Before the U.S. declared war, Lambert sought to join the British Royal Flying Corps that was recruiting in Toronto. He was accepted in June 1917 and received only four rather than the standard six to eight weeks of basic training. Wilson speculates that it was shortened due to the heavy losses suffered by the RFC during "Bloody April" of 1917. Surprisingly, he was sent home to Ohio for a brief visit before being sent overseas.

Lambert flew old Avros and the single-seat Sopwith Pup ("one of the nicest machines that any pilot could want"). He disliked the Sopwith Camel, and enjoyed the SPAD although "it would fall like a brick." Lambert scored his 22 aerial kills flying the S.E.5a in No. 24 Squadron starting in March 1918. A nervous breakdown in August ended his WW1 career.

Wilson's book is well written, entertaining, and covers Lambert's post-WW1 experiences without ignoring his caustic personality.

Reviewed by Dana Lombardy, publisher of *WWOI*



**Oswald Boelcke:
Germany's First Fighter Ace and
Father of Air Combat**

By R. G. Head

Grub Street Publishing, 2016

240 pages, map, photos, tables, appendices,
index

ISBN 9-781-910690-23-9 \$39.95

Available in the U.S. through Casemate
Publishers

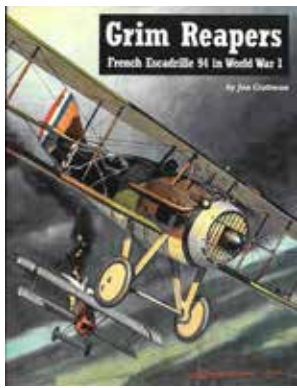
Head's distinguished U.S. Air Force career involved flying several combat aircraft and assignments in Vietnam. His work on Boelcke reflects Head's insights on how aerial combat assumed a definitive role due to Boelcke's leadership and legacy.

The book covers aviators, the physical flying environment, and the rewards associated with combat aviation.

The formation and evolution of Germany's air service is interwoven with Boelcke's life. Information on aeroplanes is covered in detail, particularly the Fokker Eindecker models and Albatros series that replaced it.

Most important is the discussion of Boelcke's Dicta, the foundation of formal German fighter tactic principles he wrote in 1916 that still apply today (although not always attributed to him). Boelcke's concept of deploying fighters in squadron formation produced higher effectiveness and protection especially when flying together under the lead of an expert pilot.

Abridged from review by Terrence Finnegan in *Road to the Great War-ww1.blogspot.com/*



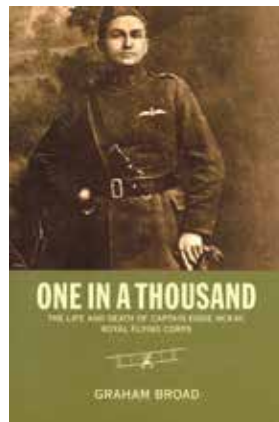
Grim Reapers:
French Escadrille 94 in World War I
 By Jon Guttman
 Aeronaut Books, 2016
 87 + 7 pages of notes, 105 color and B&W photos, and 16 color airplane profiles, appendices
 ISBN 978-1-9358-8140-7 \$29.99

This is an exceptional squadron history. It is based on interviews with several pilots that were conducted as far back as the 1970s. Guttman provides insightful, well-written context on the pilots, their aircraft, markings, their adversaries, and daily squadron life.

Escadrille N.94 was created in May 1917, started by flying Nieuport 24s and later transitioned to Spad 7s and 13s as Spa.94. In early 1918, N.94 was split to form a new escadrille, N.156. The latter was one of the few units to fly the Morane-Saulnier AI, a beautiful but fatally flawed high-wing monoplane. The author's discussion of the short combat history of this little-known fighter is one of many gems in this account.

A number of Americans flew in Escadrilles 94 and 156, including the ace David Putnam and the little-known Austen Crehore. Crehore was one of the few Americans to be inducted as a *Chevalier* of the *French Légion d'Honneur*. (His story is one that deserves to be remembered.) Very highly recommended.

Reviewed by Steve Suddaby, past president of WW1HA



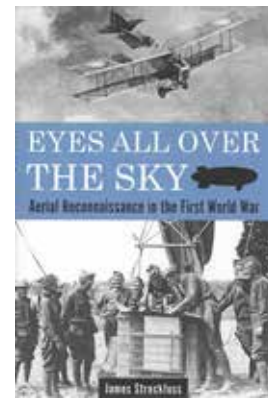
One in a Thousand:
The Life and Death of Captain Eddie McKay, Royal Flying Corps
 By Graham Broad
 University of Toronto Press, 2017
 171 pages, map, photos, political cartoon, period advertisement, index
 ISBN 978-1-4426-0746-0 \$26.95 pb

Tim Cook, a historian at the Canadian War Museum, wrote that this “well-written and deeply researched microhistory offers a detailed biography of one of Canada’s most important fighter pilots from the Great War.” Captain Eddie McKay flew with No. 24 Squadron. He fought over the Somme offensive from July to October 1916 and survived “Bloody April” in 1917. McKay disappeared on 28 December as commander of “A” Flight, No. 23 Squadron. He was last seen diving on a German two-seater southeast of Ypres.

This book is unusual among Great War aviation titles because, as Cook comments, “[Broad] skillfully weaves... a robust defence of the historical process as he lays out the writing of the history with its successes and failures, investigative victories, and time-consuming historical dead ends. This forensic deconstruction of historical methods, tools, and approaches is first class.”

Professor Broad’s extensive notes on how to identify relevant source materials, how to pose questions, and how to assemble a book into a coherent story are invaluable.

Reviewed by Dana Lombardy, publisher of WWOI



Eyes All Over the Sky:
Aerial Reconnaissance in the First World War
 By Dr. James Streckfuss
 Casemate Publishers, 2016
 239 + xv pages, maps, photos, index
 ISBN 978-1-61200-367-2 \$32.95

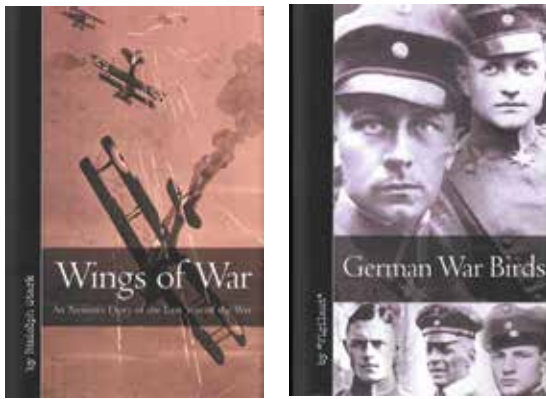
This is not only a good book, it’s an important book. Streckfuss argues convincingly that the least-studied segment of WW1 aviation, aerial reconnaissance, was also the most important. The landplanes, seaplanes, and captive balloons devoted to observation turned artillery into a dominant force on the battlefield by extending its range and accuracy to an extent unimaginable in past wars.

Aerial photography conducted by planes and balloons became the most important intelligence source by far for battlefield commanders at all levels. For the first time in history, commanders did not have to wonder what was over the next hill—weather permitting, they had photographs and photo-based maps, some of which were only hours old.

Despite its critical role, aerial reconnaissance aircraft ended up taking a back seat to the fighters and bombers then and since. The mystique of the fighter pilot is well known, but the offensive “air power” of bombers between the wars eclipsed everything.

This well-researched history belongs on the shelf of anyone with a serious interest in the air war or the ground war of 1914-1918.

Reviewed by Steve Suddaby, past president of WW1HA



Vintage Aviation Series

By Various WWI Pilots, Casemate Publishers, 2015-2016
200 pages minimum, \$29.95

Casemate is republishing a number of classic pilot autobiographies and histories from World War One. These include works by James McCudden, Charles Biddle, Rudolf Stark, L.A. Strange, and others. Most of these books were originally published in the 1930s and several times since, but are now out of print. While these reasonably priced hardcover books are reprints of the originals, they are not facsimiles, so the type is clear and very readable.

Brief descriptions of the four books available to this reviewer follow:

Recollections of an Airman

By Lt-Col Louis Arbon Strange
224 pages, 19 photos, first published 1933

L.A. Strange was one of the original Royal Flying Corps pilots to fly to France in August 1914 and served in various capacities through the end of the war. In addition to flying reconnaissance, bombing, and fighter missions, he served in various leadership roles in RFC training schools, ending the war back in France as a Royal Air Force Wing Commander. His varied career makes this an important source for first-hand information on the RFC and RAF.

Wings of War

By Rudolph Stark
200 pages, 14 illustrations, first published 1932

Lieutenant Rudolf Stark flew in *Jagdstaffel* 34 and commanded *Jagdstaffel* 35 in the last year of the war. His autobiography provides a thoughtful look at the decline of Germany, its military, and its air force in the last half of 1918. Stark was also a very

good painter and his vivid paintings of aerial combat provide most of the b&w illustrations.

The Way of the Eagle

By Major Charles J. Biddle
346 pages, 21 photos, first published 1919

Charles Biddle first flew with the French Lafayette Flying Corps in summer 1917 as part of *Escadrille* N.73, one of the fighter squadrons in the elite "Storks" group. After the U.S. entered the conflict, he flew in the 103rd Aero Squadron and later commanded the 13th Aero and the 4th Pursuit Group, U.S. Air Service. His autobiography consists of his letters home during the war, sometimes supplemented by information he could not write originally due to censorship.

German War Birds

By "Vigilant" (Claude Sykes)
245 pages, 24 photos, first published 1931

This classic is greatly enhanced with an introduction the exceptional British historian Norman Franks, who puts this work into historical context—one of the first exposures of the English-speaking public to information about individual German and Austrian aviators. Claude Sykes' wide-ranging book goes beyond fighter aces of the Western Front to include reconnaissance, bomber, airship, and even kite balloon aviators in Galicia, Salonika, the Middle East, and the Far East.

There are eight other books in this Vintage Aviation Series:

King of Air Fighters: The Biography of Major "Mick" Mannock, VC, DSO, MC, by Ira Jones

Immelmann: The Eagle of Lille, by Frantz Immelmann

Flying Fury: Five Years in the Royal Flying Corps, by Major James T.B. McCudden

Knight of Germany: Oswald Boelcke, German Ace, by Johannes Werner

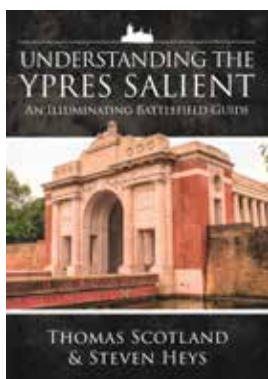
An Air Fighter's Scrapbook, collection of experiences by British pilot Ira "Taffy" Jones

Jagdstaffel 356: The Story of a German Fighter Squadron, by M.E. Kähnert

Night Raiders of the Air, by British bomber pilot A.R. Kingsford

Fighter Pilot, By "McScotch" (William MacLanachan)

Reviewed by Steve Suddaby, past president of WW1HA



**Understanding the Ypres Salient:
An Illuminating Battlefield Guide**

*By Thomas Scotland and Steven Heys
Helion and Company, 2017*

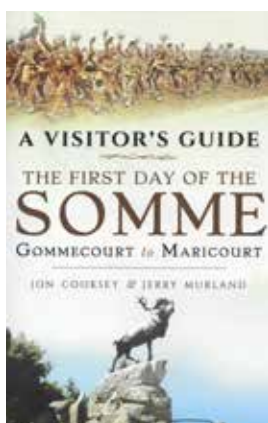
291 pages, maps and photos (most in color), tables, index

ISBN 978-1-91-151250-9 \$39.95 pb

Available in the U.S. through Casemate Publishers

This is a well-organized and lavishly illustrated guidebook that identifies dozens of key locations around the town of Ypres in Belgium. Three major battles were fought there, in 1914, 1915, and 1917, resulting in massive casualties but moving the frontline at most only a few miles. There are dozens of color historical maps and color modern photos with key locations noted on the photos. These are interspersed with the text and are easy to follow. Highly recommended.

Reviewed by Dana Lombardy, publisher of WWOI



A Visitor's Guide – The First Day of the Somme:

Gommecourt to Maricourt

*By Jon Cooksey and Jerry Murland
Pen and Sword Military, 2016*

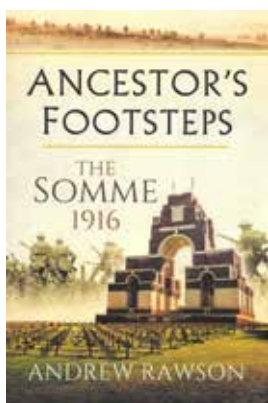
233 pages, maps, photos, appendices, index

ISBN 978-1-4738-2799-8 \$24.95 pb

Available in the U.S. through Casemate Publishers

This guidebook uses a different approach from the previous one above that covers Ypres, and it is much less effective and rather old fashioned. There are no color maps or color photos and the book is not as well organized. For example, the modern map of Serre shows twelve numbered locations, but these appear over the next 28 pages and are not easy to follow. There are many historical photos, including several of the soldiers who fought there with brief descriptions of what these men did.

Reviewed by Dana Lombardy, publisher of WWOI



Ancestor's Footsteps:

The Somme 1916

By Andrew Rawson

Pen and Sword Military, 2016

240 pages, maps, photos, index

ISBN 978-1-4738-6420-7 \$22.95 pb

Available in the U.S. through Casemate Publishers

The publisher explains that the purpose of this book is to answer "questions asked by visitors to the Somme; where did my ancestor fight?" It uses battle accounts with modern notations on historical trench maps, intended to help the reader locate individual units. The index has an impressive list of military units, but it may not be easy for someone standing on the battlefield today to locate where their ancestor's unit actually would have been 100 years ago by looking at these historical black & white maps.

Reviewed by Dana Lombardy, publisher of WWOI



**Walking the Western Front:
The Somme 1916, The First of July**

By Ed Skelding

Pen and Sword Military, 2016

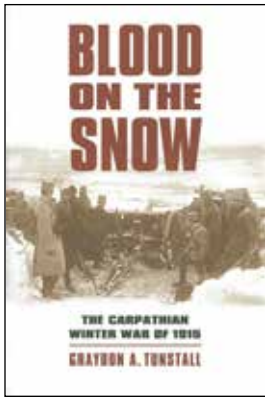
240 pages, maps and photos (most in color), index

ISBN 978-1-78159-202-1 \$39.95

Available in the U.S. through Casemate Publishers

This book is a companion to the BBC DVD series *Walking the Western Front*. It includes 150 prints in color and black and white taken during multiple filming trips to the Somme. Historical photos taken 100 years ago are accompanied by shots in the exact same spot today. Many of the modern photos are beautiful, in sharp contrast to the carnage and destruction that occurred in these locations. The captions and narrative accompanying the images are well written and include interesting historical stories.

Reviewed by Dana Lombardy, publisher of WWOI



Blood on the Snow:
The Carpathian Winter War of 1915
 By Graydon A. Tunstall
 University Press of Kansas, 2010
 258 + ix pages, maps, photos, index
 ISBN 978-0-7006-1858-3 \$24.95
 pb
**Winner of the 2010 Tomlinson
 Book Prize Award**



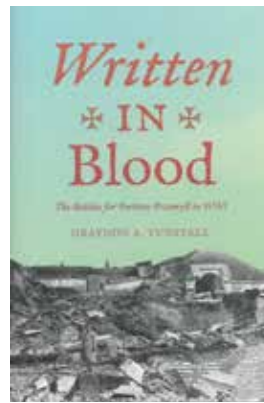
This is the first book-length account of the Carpathian campaign of 1915, described by some as the “Stalingrad of the First World War.” It was also the first English-language account of WW1 Eastern Front military operations in more than 30 years.

Tunstall did research in Vienna’s and Budapest’s War Archives, and his narrative incorporates material drawn from eyewitness accounts, personal diaries, army logbooks, and correspondence among members of the high command. He shows that the roots of the Habsburg collapse in Russia in 1916 were established in the winter campaign of 1915. Its accolades and Tomlinson award were well deserved.

Reviewed by Dana Lombardy, publisher of WWOI

The U.S. Army War College Quarterly *Parameters*: “The book is a detailed case study, based on extensive primary source research, of an attempt to devise a viable strategy to meet drastically-changed, unforeseen conditions with impending crisis....”

New York Military Affairs Symposium, *NYMAS Review*: “In giving a full account of the winter war, Tunstall has rendered a vital service to our understanding of World War I. This is a must book for experts and novices alike.”



Written in Blood:
The Battles for Fortress Przemysl in WWI
 By Graydon A. Tunstall
 Indiana University Press, 2016
 386 + xi pages, maps, photos, index
 ISBN 978-0-2530-2197-7 \$45.00
**Winner of the 2016 Tomlinson
 Book Prize Award**



A series of battles to capture and relieve the besieged Habsburg Fortress of Przemysl during the fall of 1914 and early 1915 was bloodier than Verdun. By the time the fortress finally fell to the Russians on 22 March 1915, the Austro-Hungarian Army had sustained 800,000 casualties; the Russians, over a million.

Control of the fortress changed hands three times during the fall of 1914. In 1915, several Austro-Hungarian armies launched three major offensives to penetrate the Russian encirclement and rescue the 120,000 men trapped in the fortress. Tunstall argues that Przemysl had served its purpose: the besieged garrison kept the Russian army from advancing farther and perhaps causing the collapse of the weakened Habsburg forces.

Reviewed by Dana Lombardy, publisher of WWOI

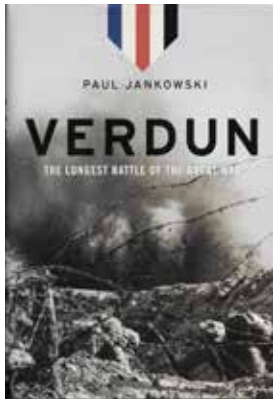
Dennis Showalter: “A valuable and unique contribution to the history of both WWI and European fortress war. This work will be cited long after ones on more glamorous subjects have been relegated to library shelves, and in my professional judgment, Tunstall is the only scholar who could have done it.”

TOMLINSON BOOK PRIZE

The World War One Historical Association’s Tomlinson Book Prize consists of a cash award plus a bronze plaque made possible through a grant from Norman B. Tomlinson, Jr., Director-emeritus of The Western Front Association – United States Branch.

Awards have been bestowed since 1999 with 24 recipients to date, including two in 2017 and three each in 2016 and 2010.

For details on how to submit a book for consideration, contact prize jury member and historian Michael S. Neiberg at neiberg102@gmail.com



Verdun:
The Longest Battle of the Great War
 By Paul Jankowski
 Oxford University Press, 2014
 336 pages, photos, index
 ISBN 978-0-1906-1971-8 \$17.95 pb
 Winner of the 2014 Tomlinson Book Prize Award

This new look at arguably the most famous battle on the Western Front earned well-deserved praise. It mixes traditional military history with social and cultural history that considers the soldiers' experiences, the institutional structures of the military, and the impact of war on national identity.

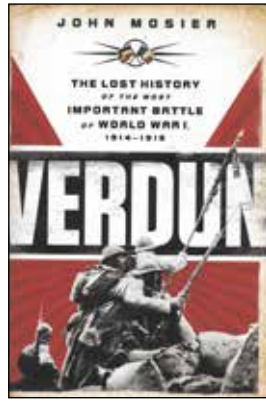
The review in *Army History* felt that "the author exposes many of the myths about the battle that have developed...."

Publishers Weekly noted "Jankowski has written a superb, definitive popular account of Verdun through the eyes of soldiers, military leaders, and citizens of the two nations."

Philip Jenkins in *Books & Culture* exclaimed "Jankowski's revisionist book is a major achievement...The writing throughout is of the highest order... At every stage, Jankowski integrates the military narrative with broader political and cultural dimensions... Jankowski's book offers a model history of warfare."

An exceptional history, and the photos and captions are first rate, but the publisher's decision to not include any maps with Jankowski's excellent narrative is extremely disappointing.

Reviewed by Dana Lombardy, publisher of *WWOI*



Verdun:
The Lost History of the Most Important Battle of World War I, 1914-1918
 By John Mosier
 Dutton Caliber, 2014
 416 pages, maps, photos, index
 ISBN 978-0-451-41463-2 \$16.00 pb

John Mosier is controversial, even reviled by some historians. His other works include *The Myth of the Great War* and *The Blitzkrieg Myth*, which exemplify his approach.

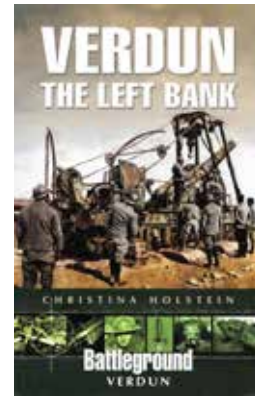
The review in *The Journal of Military History* by Robert A. Doughty noted that Mosier "charges military leaders such as Joseph Joffre and Ferdinand Foch with incompetence, ignorance, and, even worse, not caring about casualties." Donkeys indeed!

Mosier consulted memoirs, diaries, and secondary sources published in France during and after the war that were highly critical of the high command. But Doughty also observed that "Mosier did not research in the French archives by saying, 'We should be extremely wary of official documents.'"

Doughty concluded: "an interesting, well-written, provocative book, ... there is anything new in the book, it is the author's inclusion of the nine different battles that occurred in the vicinity of Verdun, not his unearthing of the supposed 'lost history.'"

Reviewed by Dana Lombardy, publisher of *WWOI*

The Washington Times: "...one of the more entertainingly contrarian military historians writing today."



Verdun:
The Left Bank
 By Christina Holstein
 Pen and Sword Military, 2016
 190 pages, maps, photos, index
 ISBN 978-1-47382-703-5 \$24.95 pb

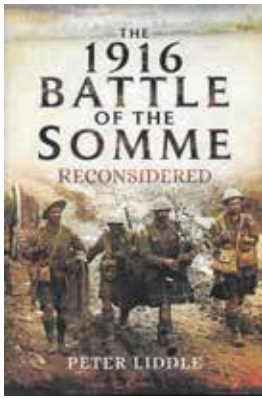
This is the author's fourth book in Pen and Sword's Battleground Europe series covering the Battle of Verdun in 1916. Although there is a short 2-page section at the beginning called "Advice to Tourers," it is not meant to be a battlefield guide. The book includes a plethora of historical and modern black & white photos.

Most of the histories of the 11-month battle focus on the German capture of Fort Douaumont in February in the initial attack, the offensive of 23 June when French commander Pétain considered withdrawing, or the final attempt on Fort Souville that summer. These all took place in the central area of the Right (East) Bank.

There were nine battles in the area of the Left Bank, generally referred to as the battle of the flanks, that included the struggle to reach Fort Vaux. As author Holstein points out "During that period [end of February through May] the flanks were not a sideshow to the battle; they were the battle...."

Well researched and a nicely done short history.

Reviewed by Dana Lombardy, publisher of *WWOI*



The 1916 Battle of the Somme: Reconsidered

By Peter Liddle

Pen and Sword Military, 2016

180 + xii pages, maps, photos and images, appendices, index

ISBN 978-1-78340-051-5 \$39.95

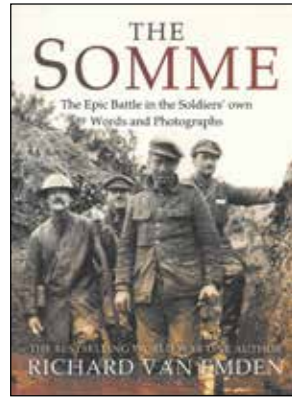
Available in the U.S. through Casemate Publishers

Twenty-four years prior to the release of this book, historian Peter Liddle’s “classic” *The Soldier’s War, 1914-1918* introduced readers to the four-and-a-half month Battle of the Somme. Here “Liddle reconsiders the battle in the light of recent scholarship” although without using even one German source or citing even one German unit in the index.

His narrative of “one of the most significant and controversial episodes in British military history” is “based on the graphic and revealing first-hand testimony of [British] soldiers....” An analogy might be to read the description of a football game (American or British) that presents only one side’s actions, decisions, and feelings.

Liddle’s end chapter “Verdict” claims “that in 1916-17 terms, a British victory was won on the Somme,” and “that the resolve of the soldier of the [BEF] had not been broken by the experience....” Compared to Passchendaele a year later, the Somme could be considered a wildly successful operation.

Reviewed by Dana Lombardy, publisher of WWOI



The Somme:

The Epic Battle in the Soldiers’ own Words and Photographs

By Richard Van Emden

Pen and Sword Military, 2016

355 pages, maps, photos, index

ISBN 978-1-4738-8517-2 \$29.95 pb

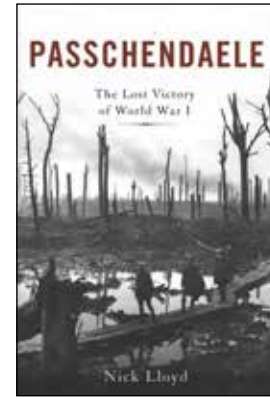
Available in the U.S. through Casemate Publishers

This is a wonderful book, filled with new or rarely-before-seen sepia-tinted photos, many from the soldiers’ own private collections. These images are linked to appropriate text such as these observations on the first day by Rifleman Giles Eyre of the 2nd Kings Rifle Corps:

“We are now scrambling over what must have been the British front line trenches, a maze of humps and hill-ocks, half-filled-in ditches, mounds of faded and burst sandbags, barbed wire clumps sticking out here and there, shell holes, smashed trench boards and a litter of rusty tins, pieces of equipment, broken rifles and goodness knows what else.” Eyre continues: “We strike out into what was once no-man’s-land, ... Here all the casualties have not been gathered in yet, and horrible-looking bundles of khaki, once men, still lie in shell holes.”

Van Emden is not trying to write a study of the Somme campaign, but he does form some opinions: “Before the Somme, there was still public optimism that the war could be won with one great masterstroke ... idealism did perish on the Somme.”

Reviewed by Dana Lombardy, publisher of WWOI



Passchendaele:

The Lost Victory of World War I

By Nick Lloyd

Basic Books, 2017

410 pages, maps, photos, index

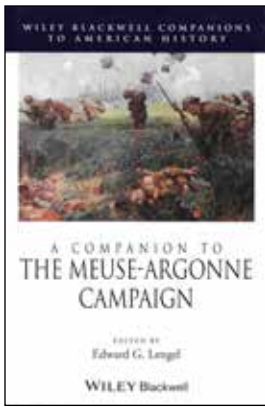
ISBN 978-0-465-09477-6 \$32.00

Author Nick Lloyd’s argument is that the 105-day Battle of Passchendaele (Third Battle of Ypres) in the summer and fall of 1917 was “eminently winnable” by the British. He claims the German Army came close to defeat and how continued fighting might have meant an end to the war.

Lloyd concludes that British commander Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig “let slip the opportunity to hammer the German Army, condemning his men to weeks of wasted effort in a vain attempt to achieve a breakthrough.” The battlefield turned into a quagmire after the heaviest rains in 30 years. Tanks were immobilized and horses and men drowned in the mud.

I was hoping for some new revelations from the outstanding list of primary sources in the bibliography. Although it is an excellent retelling of this horrific battle, nothing is presented that counters the verdict of Prime Minister David Lloyd George’s 1938 memoirs: “Passchendaele was indeed one of the greatest disasters of the war ... No soldier of any intelligence now defends this senseless campaign.”

Reviewed by Dana Lombardy, publisher of WWOI



A Companion to the Meuse-Argonne Campaign
 Edited by Edward G. Lengel
 John Wiley & Sons, 2014
 537 + xii pages, maps, tables, index
 ISBN 978-1-4443-5094-4 \$200.95

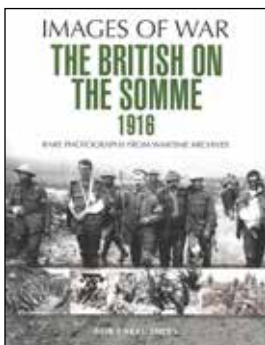
This impressive work contains essays by 29 historians on a variety of aspects pertaining to the largest and bloodiest battle in U.S. Army history until the Battle of the Bulge in World War Two. As B. H. Allen wrote in the *Academia.edu Literature Review* of the book, the battle “is barely even mentioned in most general histories of the Great War.”

The 47-day offensive in 1918 involved 1.2 million doughboys who suffered 122,000 casualties, including more than 26,000 dead. Commander of the American Expeditionary Forces John Pershing wrote that 22 American and 4 French divisions engaged and defeated 47 German divisions. Although the German divisions were smaller, they had the advantage of good defensive terrain and a well-established trench system. They also represented 25 percent of Germany’s divisional strength on the Western Front.

Allen noted that why the American accomplishment is ignored “is a controversy whose lines have predominantly been drawn along national borders. British and Canadian historians, with the notable exceptions of Basil Henry Liddell Hart and John Keegan, have largely dismissed the U.S. contribution as ‘above all psychological.’”

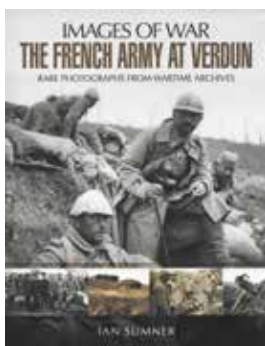
Hopefully, this book will help adjust that impression.

Reviewed by Dana Lombardy, publisher of WWOI



Images of War: Rare Photographs From Wartime Archives
 Pen and Sword Military

The British On the Somme 1916, 2017
 By Bob Carruthers
 128 pages, map, photos
 ISBN 978-1-47383-781-2 \$19.95 pb

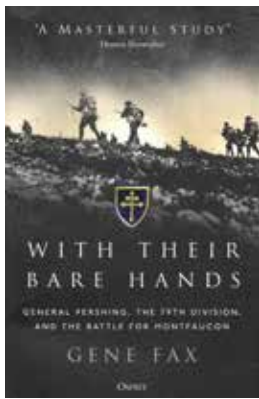


The French Army at Verdun, 2016
 By Ian Sumner
 121 pages, map, photos
 ISBN 978-1-47385-615-8 \$19.95 pb

The photo albums in the *Images of War* series each contain up to 250 black and white archival photographs. The Somme photographs are accompanied by text written by Official War Correspondent Sir Philip Gibbs, who was an eyewitness to the events. Some of his captions are questionable. For example, on page 42 there is a photo of a British 6-inch howitzer with the notation “there were too few heavy guns available to the British on 1 July.” This sounds like an official excuse to explain the lack of success. The British Army had 427 heavy guns on 1 July, nearly four times the number available at the Battle of Loos nine months earlier in September 1915. And the claim on page 123 that the Somme was the bloodiest battle of the Great War ignores Verdun and the battle for Przemyl on the Eastern Front.

By comparison, the Verdun book’s captions are longer and much more detailed and interesting. Unfortunately, neither book has an index, making it impossible to relocate interesting images and text.

Reviewed by Dana Lombardy, publisher of WWOI



**With Their Bare Hands:
General Pershing, the 79th
Division, and the Battle for
Montfaucon**

By Gene Fax
Osprey Publishing, 2017
495 pages, maps, photos, appendices, index
ISBN 978-1-4728-1923-9 \$32.00

Gene Fax earned well-deserved praise for this very detailed presentation of the U.S. 79th Division's famous assault on the heavily fortified German position on Montfaucon at the start of the 1918 Meuse-Argonne offensive.

Although concentrating on this one engagement, Fax uses half the book to explain the background of this seemingly impregnable location, America's entry into the war, the recruitment and raising of the 79th, a chapter on what was wrong with Army doctrine, another on what was wrong with training (that also notes the first cases of influenza initially not regarded as a serious threat), American troops' introduction to combat by helping to stop the German 1918 spring offensive, plus a description of the Meuse-Argonne terrain and the German Army. The actual struggle for Montfaucon is told over three action-packed chapters.

Nicely written, filled with anecdotes, this terrific book was a finalist for a Distinguished Writing Award by the Army Historical Foundation. Gene is an Official Partner of the U.S. World War I Commemorative Commission.

Reviewed by Dana Lombardy,
publisher of *WWOI*



**Betrayal at Little Gibraltar:
A German Fortress, a Treacherous
American General, and the Battle
to End World War I**

By William Walker
Scribner, 2016
447 + xv pages, maps, photos, appendix, index
ISBN 978-1-5011-1791-6 \$18.00 pb

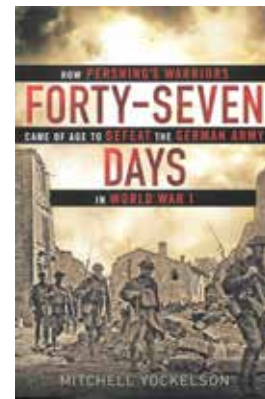
The attack on the Montfaucon fortified position on 26-27 September 1918 resulted in thousands of casualties to the 79th Division. In *With Their Bare Hands* there is a one-page explanation of the roots of the controversy. Here an entire book examines this event and lays out a more sinister reason: a deliberate "betrayal" by III Corps commander Robert Lee Bullard and a post-war cover up.

The 79th Division was in the V Corps. The unit on its right, 4th Division, was in Bullard's III Corps. Walker alleges that Bullard and his chief of staff were the ones that prevented the 4th Division from "turning" to support the 79th assault.

Pershing relieved many other generals during the war. Why was Bullard promoted to command the new American 2nd Army if there were any doubts about his abilities? Readers can decide if Walker uses tabloid "facts" or has discovered an intriguing true story.

Reviewed by Dana Lombardy, publisher of *WWOI*

Knoxville News Sentinel: "Well-written, ... lavishly illustrated ... gripping ... compelling...."



**Forty-Seven Days:
How Pershing's Warriors Came of
Age to Defeat the German Army
in World War I**

By Mitchell Yockelson
New American Library, 2016
390 + ix pages, maps, photos, index
ISBN 978-0-4514-6695-2 \$28.00

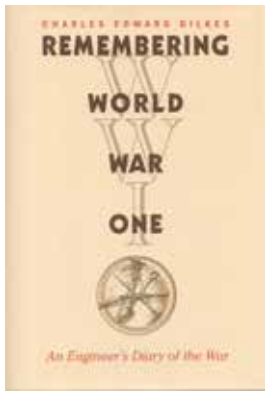
This is a skillful re-telling of the Meuse-Argonne battle, focusing on the key American leaders and heroes and select events during the 47 days of the offensive. This is followed with an "Aftermath" chapter that contains concise post-WW1 biographies of many of the main characters, including their WW2 experiences. The book is largely told from the point of view of General Pershing using numerous sources, including the general's diaries.

It is hard to put the book down once started. Yockelson is able to weave his narrative of the entire campaign, without getting bogged down in detail.

However, this reviewer wishes there was more critique, assessment, or analysis of Pershing or of the AEF based on the author's years of researching WW1 and employment at the National Archives. Was General Pershing the right man for the job?

Reviewed by Randy Gaulke

[Kirkus Reviews called Yockelson's book "An accessible, elucidating study by a knowledgeable expert." Seven excellent maps explain the staged movement across the front at various times.—Ed.]



Charles Edward Dilkes, Remembering World War One: An Engineer's Diary of the War
 Edited by Virginia Dilkes, Georgia Dilkes Harris and Lola Dilkes Koniuszy
 Juliet Publishing, 2014
 192 + xxiv pages, maps, figures, photos, appendix, index
 ISBN: 978-0-692-02861-2
 \$27.95

This memoir of a volunteer engineer covers Dilkes's enlistment, journey to France, and the battles in which he was involved while serving in the 1st Division from May 1917 to September 1919. It is an invaluable source of information on what life was like for an American soldier on the Western Front. It is well written, informative, and, on occasions, even entertaining.

Dilkes's memoir bears the hallmark of a literary man and is characterized by a refreshing honesty. Dilkes's joy at the end of the hostilities prompts him to mention AEF commander General Pershing's admiration for the division: "At this time there is great reason for our jubilee because we knew the feeling our esteemed General John J. Pershing held towards the First Division when on July 17, 1919, at London he delivered a speech from which an extract is here quoted:

'You will recall that when our First Division entered the battle line and fought the small though brilliant battle—the first as an independent command—at Cantigny, that the success which attended the attack not only set an example for future American divisions to follow, but really had an electrifying effect through the Allied lines and gave new hope to the armies.'"

Dilkes's memoir is enhanced by the meticulous editing work carried out by his three daughters. The numerous historical context features, under the heading "Living History," provide valuable background information. *Remembering World War One* is beautifully illustrated, with maps, pictures of artifacts and photographs. There is an extensive register of notes, a comprehensive glossary of abbreviations, and a useful bibliography of primary and secondary sources, poetry cited, and assorted references. *Remembering World War One* is unusually detailed, unusually well edited, and, perhaps most importantly of all, very human.

Jane M. Ekstam, professor at Hogskolen i Ostfold, Halden, Norway



Rags: Hero Dog of WWI, A True Story
 Written by Margot Theis Raven, illustrated by Petra Brown
 Sleeping Bear Press, 2014
 31 pages, for ages 6-10
 ISBN 978-1-58536-258-5 \$16.99

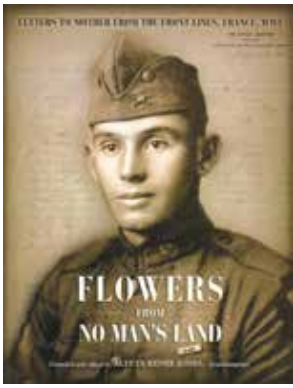
Mascots were some of the most beloved members of military units during World War 1. A statue of the German shepherd who served with the Marines in France is on proud display at the Marine Corps University in Quantico, Virginia.

This book for children is the story of Rags, a mangy stray rescued from the streets in Paris by an American Army enlisted man named James Donovan serving in the 1st Division. Rags served with distinction, delivering messages and endearing himself to the unit. He won citations and was wounded.

Near the end of the war, both Rags and his owner were wounded in a gas attack. Rags was treated at an aid station and then smuggled on board the ship returning his owner to the U.S. for treatment. Private Donovan did not recover. Rags continued to serve in the division until his death in 1936. His long life and contributions are included at the end of story enabling the reader to answer the "What happened after that?" question. The story is an endearing one and the illustrations well done.

Reviewed by Anne Merritt





**Flowers from No Man's Land:
Letters to Mother from the Front
Lines, France, WWI**

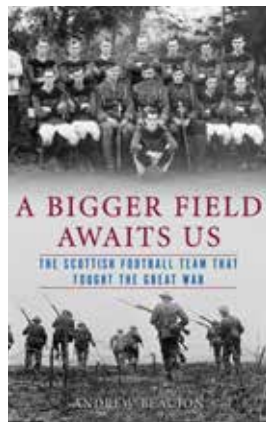
Compiled and Edited by Aleeta Renée Jones
Inkwater Press, 2015
251 + xx pages, maps, photos, images of
letters, afterword
ISBN 978-1-629011608 \$24.95

This memoir of Alfred Earl Jones, who served in France in the 82nd Division, was compiled by his granddaughter. It is a well-presented and documented set of the personal letters of an American enlisted man who fought in the Meuse-Argonne. He survived combat without receiving any wounds and he even managed to send home some dried flowers from the front.

It's always interesting to see what a correspondent finds appealing and worthy of mention to his family. Alfred was a man who spent a lot of time outdoors. He noticed the differences between France and the United States, hence the flowers. Like most men, he was desperate for news, even telling his mother to nudge his sister to write.

Alfred Jones's experiences and war service are given context in the afterword by Jon Oberdorf, using the *Official History of the 82nd Division* and including maps. Jones was involved in important battles of the 1918 offensive. This section gives context to the memoir—it becomes a useful presentation of the ordinary soldier's experiences in the AEF.

Reviewed by Anne Merritt



**A Bigger Field Awaits Us:
The Scottish Football Team That
Fought the Great War**

By Andrew Beaujon
Chicago Review Press, 2018
288 pages, photos, index
ISBN 978-0-89733-736-6 \$26.99

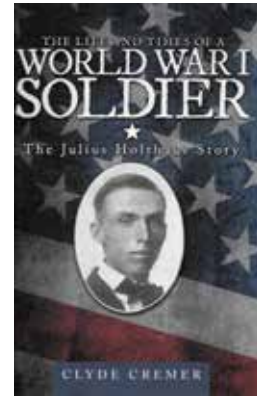
Tells the story of eleven Scottish football players and their fans who volunteered for the 16th Royal Scots Battalion in November 1914. Seven months later the battalion lost 80 percent of its 800-plus men during the nearly-five-month-long Battle of the Somme. In May 1918 the battalion was disbanded to provide its 400 soldiers as replacements for other units.

A Bigger Field is not a narrow examination of a famous battle viewed through the lens of one infantry battalion. It reads like a work of fiction but is an excellent short history of the Somme offensive with well-placed photos throughout the text.

Beaujon covers political maneuverings, sneaky journalists, early motion pictures, 1,700 footballs sent to British soldiers held in German prisoner-of-war camps, the war beyond 1916 including the Battle of Arras in April 1917 where the battalion's operational strength was under 300 officers and men, and postwar myth making and cover ups such as the British Ministry of Information that was disbanded in November 1918 and all its records destroyed.

A wonderful, unexpected book.

Reviewed by Dana Lombardy, publisher of WWOI



**The Life and Times of a World
War I Soldier:
The Julius Holthaus Story**

By Clyde Cremer
iUniverse, 2014
411 pages, photos, tables, index
ISBN 978-1-4917-2979-3 \$27.95 pb

An affectionate work about an ancestor by a U.S. Army veteran who found the spot in the Argonne forest where Julius Holthaus' body was recovered and then wrote a story about him using Holthaus' diary and extensive research.

The amount of detail is impressive, including notes about the German 76th Reserve Division that fought against the American 77th Division in 1918. Images display some of the German officers as well as scenes of American doughboys during the war, Julius' mother and aunt at his grave during the Gold Star Mothers pilgrimages in the early 1930s, modern photographs of relatives and friends visiting in France, and the remnants of fortifications and trenches Cremer discovered.

This book really needed an editor. Too many ALL CAPITAL words and exclamation points (!) detract from the narrative. Tables on monthly production rates of artillery pieces are mixed with a table of brass used in military equipment, food prices in 1776 (yes, it says 1776), market reports for 1916, etc., etc. An end-of-book data dump that does nothing to further the story of Holthaus.

Reviewed by Dana Lombardy, publisher of WWOI



**The First World War on Cigarette and Trade Cards:
An Illustrated and Descriptive History**

By Cyril Mazansky
Schiffer Publishing, 2014
190 pages, images (most in color), appendix
ISBN 978-0-7643-4759-7 \$45.00

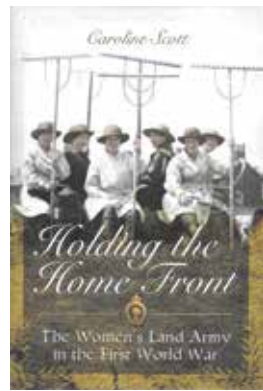
This impressive volume is the product of thirty years of cartophilic collecting by the author, in the category of warfare and the Great War specifically. Some cards with WW1 subjects were published after the war, but the vast majority of the cards in the book were published during the war as inserts in packs of cigarettes or as trade cards with biscuits and other non-tobacco products. Most are British-produced cards but some German language sets are included.

Mazansky notes that the tobacco companies were motivated by both patriotism and profit, and almost all cards served a propaganda purpose. Some of the images include well-known photos and illustrations that appeared in newspapers and books, including battle scenes and incidents where a soldier earned the Victoria Cross. The front of the cards shows the image and title with descriptive text on the opposite side.

This is a well-organized book with chapters on monarchs, political and military leaders, war scenes, weapons and equipment, uniforms, army life, the home front, and war humor.

A real pleasure to examine again and again.

Reviewed by Dana Lombardy,
publisher of *WWOI*



**Holding the Home Front:
The Women's Land Army in the First World War**

By Caroline Scott
Pen and Sword History, 2017
214 pages, photos and images, index
ISBN 978-1-78383-112-8 \$39.95
Available in the U.S. through Casemate Publishers

This is a well-researched history of the British Women's Land Army in WW1 and how it paved the way for the success of the WLA in the Second World War. Unlike the United States that set up agricultural colleges after the American Civil War, Great Britain lacked a unified approach to agriculture until World War One.

The Great War forced Britain to organize the agricultural community on a national level, and the WLA was in the forefront of this initiative despite male farmers' reluctance to accept women workers or their advice. One leading recruiter for the WLA wrote: "Farmers had been prejudiced and stupid about women."

A harvest crisis in 1916 was caused by lower crop yields in both Britain and America, and Russian exports were curtailed by the Ottoman blockade of the Dardanelles. This required food rationing in 1917 as prices rose by 106 percent of July 1914 levels.

In 1918, the WLA helped insure that people would not starve as its members worked the land to feed England. The WLA was disbanded in 1919 leaving the groundwork for the next agricultural crisis.

Reviewed by Anne Merritt



**Bicycles, Bloomers and Great War Rationing Recipes:
The Life and Times of Dorothy Peel OBE**

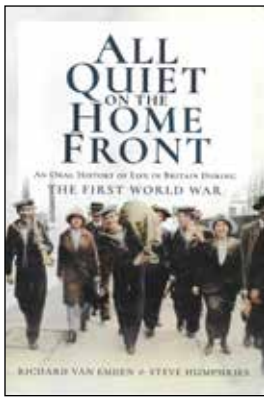
By Vicky Straker
Pen and Sword History, 2016
280 pages, photos and images (some in color), conversion tables, index
ISBN 978-1-4738-2858-2 \$49.95
Available in the U.S. through Casemate Publishers

Dorothy Peel was awarded the Order of the British Empire in 1918 by the Ministry of Food to recognize her creation of wartime recipes for householders. Peel's great granddaughter wrote this book after finding Granny Dot's cookery book on an attic shelf. Straker assembled more than 150 pages of recipes supported by color photographs and a table of measurement conversions. There is also a table that shows the compulsory ration amounts that helped cooks prepare pre-war recipes using the 1918 authorized quantities.

By 1917, Peel had a reputation for her domestic and culinary writing. The Ministry of Food contacted her to help in their task of insuring successful allocation and use of rations during the war. Using her contacts she insured nutritional content was maintained in her recipes during the rationing.

Peel wrote: "I did think that it was worthwhile to try to do what I was given a chance to do, to find ... that those who do make the most mistakes! Still, if one is frightened of failing one is not likely to succeed."

Reviewed by Anne Merritt



**All Quiet on the Home Front:
An Oral History of Life in
Britain During The First
World War**

*By Steve Humphries and Richard
van Emden*

*Pen & Sword History, 2017
334 pages, photos, index
ISBN 978-1-47389-194-4 \$24.95
Available in the U.S. by
Casemate Publishers*

This reviewer has read a number of histories of the home fronts of Britain, the U.S., and France, and this oral history is by far the most fascinating. Authors van Emden and Humphries conducted about a hundred interviews from the late 1990s until the early 2000s with people who had grown up in Britain during the war. This rich trove of experience forms the core of the book, but the authors supplemented it with letters, diaries, and earlier recorded interviews. The chapters are a harmonious blend of distinct topics and a chronological approach. The oral histories bring alive such diverse topics as the shelling of East Coast cities by the German Navy, hunger and poverty, the poor treatment of people of German descent, the Zeppelin and airplane raids on Britain, the care of the wounded, the experiences of munitions workers, etc. The chapter “It is my painful duty...”, where the interviewees recount how they were notified of the deaths of their fathers or older brothers, is absolutely heart-wrenching to read.

This is a story about the home front from the perspective of children and teenagers, and a story primarily told by women. This reviewer did not find either of these demographic situations to be a weakness of this book. These oral histories are powerful enough to stand on their own, in addition to the fact that the interviewees often also recounted their parents’ perspectives on these events. If you’re going to buy only one book on the British home front, it should be this one.

Reviewed by Steve Suddaby, past president of WW1HA who in the 1990s interviewed about 40 people who had lived through the Zeppelin raids on Hull, England.



**The WI:
A Centennial History**

*By Mavis Curtis
Amberley Publishing, 2015
244 pages, photos, index
ISBN 978-1-4456-1692-6 \$34.95*

The Women’s Institute is the story of women helping women. The WI is a hybrid of a Canadian organization conceived by Adelaide Hoodless and an urbane British group founded by suffragist Mrs. Nora Wynford Phillips. Both groups wanted to help women improve themselves and the lives of their families. Mrs. Hoodless was inspired by the death of her young son, who died from drinking milk improperly stored in the summer.

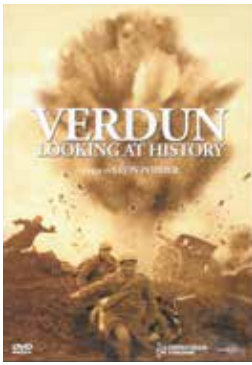
Initially, rural women were not interested as they felt their sons and husbands would belittle them. Things changed in 1915 as thousands of men went to war and women were forced to take on their work. Secretary of the British Agricultural Organization Society John Nugent Harris heard Mrs. Madge Watt, a Canadian who relocated to England, speak at an agricultural meeting where she proposed that a women’s Institute modeled on the Canadian one be started in Britain. Watt was employed by the Agricultural Society to start branches through out the country. The national association was created in 1918.

Many early members of the national Women’s Institute were active in the suffrage movement. The local groups were focused on improving women’s lives in practical domestic ways. In the public’s mind the WI was linked to the Suffragists.

The WI was not government funded. It was non-political, non-denominational and pacifist. During WW2, the Institute was invaluable in communicating within the civilian population, establishing once again produce markets for the home front population and troop support.

After WW2 the WI groups were helpful in gathering data about the rural areas for the government and worked hard to lobby for improvements in living conditions, such as electricity and running water. Today the Women’s Institute continues to help ease the isolation of rural areas.

Reviewed by Anne Merritt



Verdun: Looking at History
 Directed by Léon Poirier
 Kino Lorber Home Video, 2016
 151 minutes, in B&W with color
 extras
 DVD, \$21.00

Léon Poirier's silent classic, *Verdun, Visions d'histoire*, cast veterans as actors and extras in his 1927-28 film, providing the most realistic view of the battle possible since 1916. Poirier filmed outdoors, unusual for the 1920s, and on the original battlefield using actual explosives. He mixed a documentary-style history of the 10-month battle with stories of fictional French and German soldiers and their families. It's a seamless weaving together of 1928 film footage with footage shot during the battle, including re-creations with the original participants, like Pétain delivering for the camera his famous declaration, "They Shall Not Pass."

Poirier did not portray the Germans as subhuman brutes but rather as fellow victims of the real enemy, War itself. (This was very controversial in 1928 France, sometimes eliciting violent reactions in theaters.) Some of the most emotional scenes use "special effects" extremely well, like the double-exposure sequence of ghost-like French and German mothers retrieving together the souls of their dead sons from the battlefield.

Three supplemental features discuss the creation of the original film, its 2006 restoration of it, and the archival footage filmed at Verdun in 1916. The only complete print of the film was found in a Moscow archive. It was seized in Berlin by the Soviets at the end of WW2 after the Nazis stole it from France. Fortunately, the entire music score was with that print. This allowed the restoration team at *La Cinémathèque de Toulouse* to add the piano music that would have been played live in the theater with the film in 1928.

Verdun: Looking at History not only provides an important window into the Battle of Verdun but is also a significant milestone in the history of world cinema. It has French and German intertitles (depending on who is speaking), and optional English subtitles.

Reviewed by Steve Suddaby, past president WW1HA



**Real Stories of Love and Loss:
 14 War Stories**
 Directed by Jan Peter
 BBC America, 2014
 430 minutes, in color and B&W
 Standard Edition DVD, \$29.98

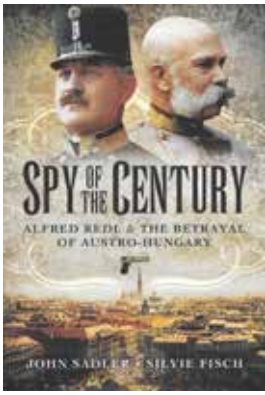
14 War Stories deftly presents a human perspective on the First World War that is simultaneously wide-ranging and personal. The title is a pun in that it dramatizes the lives of 14 ordinary people whose lives were upended by the events of the summer of '14. All of their words are from their diaries and letters; some have been published and others have languished unseen in archives and private collections for a century.

Among the fascinating people you'll meet are Yves Conger, a young boy from Sedan who lives under German occupation for four years; Marina Yurlova, a Russian Cossack girl who becomes a soldier fighting on the Caucasian Front; and Louis Barthas, a forty-something barrel maker and socialist who survives the war as a French *poilu*. Even WW1 readers who have read widely will probably know how the lives of only a few of the 14 turned out, creating true suspense.

This is truly an international production. Jan Peter is a German documentary filmmaker who insisted that the 14 storytellers speak in their own languages—seven in all. Curiously, these are rendered into English sometimes in subtitles and sometimes with voiceovers. The dramatized footage was filmed in Alsace, a place that combines German and French history, and in Quebec, where the use of an abandoned quarry made it possible to construct realistic trenches and create actual explosions. The dramatizations are juxtaposed with carefully restored archival footage that creates a realistic feel to the unfolding events.

This documentary consists of eight episodes that follow the lives of the 14 storytellers in roughly chronological order. There is a bonus feature that describes how *14 War Stories* was made.

Reviewed by Steve Suddaby, past president WW1HA



Spy of the Century
Alfred Redl & the Betrayal of
Austro-Hungary

By John Sadler & Silvie Fisch
Pen and Sword History, 2016
 170 pages, photos, illustrations,
 index

ISBN 978-1-4738-4870-2 \$39.95
 Available in the U.S. through
 Casemate Publishers

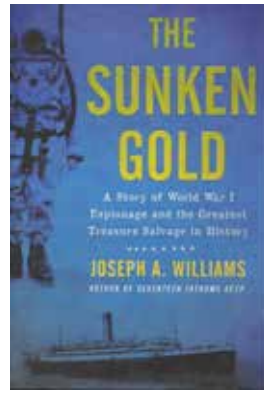
A *New York Times* review provided an irresistible description of this book's topic: "The Redl Affair had everything: sex, espionage, betrayal, a fall from greatness and a sensational climax in which Redl went to his death like a figure of high tragedy."

Alfred Redl was an Austro-Hungarian army officer and former head of the Empire's counterintelligence. In 1913, he was discovered selling military secrets to the Russians and perhaps others. After being confronted, he was allowed to commit suicide and shot himself. Notably, Redl had passed to the Russians the Empire's mobilization plans, eventually raising the important question of whether his betrayal had been a cause of Austria-Hungary's poor performance once the war started in 1914.

In the preface, the authors argue convincingly that this is the first "factual" biography of Alfred Redl in English and state clearly that there is much about his case that will never be known for certain. Sadler and Fisch do an excellent job of describing Redl's life and his situation as a perpetual outsider—a non-aristocrat homosexual of modest means, modest family background, and high intelligence. Combined with the stultifying culture of the twilight years of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and its army, they make a convincing case for their explanation of Redl's motivations for betrayal.

Sadler and Fisch could have done a better job in guiding readers through the difficult thicket of disinformation, cover-ups, yellow journalism, and politically motivated allegations that followed in the wake of the Redl affair. Despite this confusion, the book is a valuable addition to the histories of the Empire, of WW1, and of espionage itself.

Reviewed by Steve Suddaby, past president of the World War One Historical Association and a retired CIA analyst



The Sunken Gold:
A Story of World War I
Espionage and the Greatest
Treasure Salvage in History

By Joseph A. Williams
Chicago Review Press, 2017

336 pages, photos, maps, index
 ISBN 978-1-61373-758-3 \$26.99

The Sunken Gold is the story of how 43 tons of England's gold was sunk off the coast of Ireland en route to the United States and later was mostly recovered by the British. The salvage, which took a number of years, was conducted by a small group of divers working in harsh conditions without benefit of modern technology such as sonar or underwater diving tanks.

On 25 January 1917 the *HMS Laurentic* was sailing to New York when it struck two mines during a storm and sank off the coast of Ireland. The Admiralty kept the lost cargo secret and immediately started looking for ways to salvage the vessel. The recovery of the gold was assigned to England's nascent salvage group. Britain had one of the innovative divers of the time, naval officer Guybon Damant, and he was assigned the job.

It was 1919 before the divers could concentrate on the wreck since during the war the diving group was busy looking for intelligence on sunken U-boats to help break the German communication codes to counter U-boat attacks.

Over a seven-year span after the war, the divers brought up 3,186 of the 3,211 gold bars, worth almost \$22 million in 1924 (worth more than \$300 million in 2018). At that point the British government stopped funding, leaving commercial salvagers an opportunity to find some but not all of the rest of the bars.

Each chapter focuses on either the treasure or Damant, and this repeated shifting back and forth makes it a chore to concentrate on the main story—the treasure. There are two interesting stories here, but the author's choice of alternating chapters makes the reader work to stay until the end.

Reviewed by Anne Merritt



I Was a Spy!
The Classic Account of Behind-the-Lines Espionage in the First World War

By Marthe McKenna

Pool of London Press, 2015

267 pages, photographs, foreword by Winston Churchill

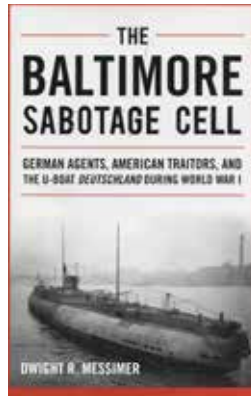
ISBN 978-1-910860-03-8 \$19.95

The author and her family were overrun in Belgium at the outbreak of the war. Instead of completing her medical studies to become a physician, Marthe became a nurse in a hospital run by the Germans. She also fed information to the British, who had set up an underground network as they retreated. Marthe proved to be intelligent, fast thinking and reliable.

An excellent nurse, she was honored with others for their efforts by the King of Württemberg. As the war continued the Germans were able to staff and monitor the occupied areas with troops whose job was to suppress resistance and locate spies. When she was finally captured for her participation in sabotage the Germans wanted to shoot her. However, her former supervisors at the hospital vouched for her work and reminded the review board that it would look awfully bad to be killing heroines with German medals. She escaped the firing squad, spending the remainder of the war in prison.

Well-written, the reader comes to appreciate the stresses that accumulated back when communications were much slower than today.

Reviewed by Anne Merritt



The Baltimore Sabotage Cell:
German Agents, American Traitors, and the U-Boat *Deutschland* During World War I

By Dwight R. Messimer

Naval Institute Press, 2015

263 pages, photos, maps, appendix, index

ISBN 978-1-59114-184-6 \$35.95

The book's focus on U-Boat *Deutschland* makes it easy to understand the experimental vessel and keep track of the groups connected with it. *Deutschland* was one of two subs designed as underwater freighters to avoid the British blockade. The other, the Bremen, was lost at sea on its initial voyage.

Support of the U-Boat was only one of the activities of the Baltimore sabotage group; it also attempted to spread diseases to horses being sent to the Allies.

Deutschland made only two successful trips before it was re-commissioned as a standard submarine after America entered the war.

The Germans and Americans in the U.S. who acquired the trade goods for shipment to Germany were in peril once the U.S. entered the war; most escaped. While some people, civilian and military, toured and inspected the *Deutschland* while docked in Baltimore, it was not until after the war that interviews with the cell's surviving participants revealed how extensive and successful the Baltimore group had been.

Well-written and unexpectedly interesting.

Reviewed by Anne Merritt



Treacherous Passage:
Germany's Secret Plot Against the United States in Mexico During World War I

By Bill Mills

Potomac Books, 2017

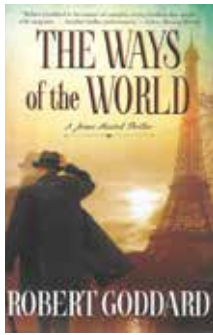
226 pages, photos, cipher table, index

ISBN 978-1-61234-854-46 \$29.95

The infamous Zimmerman telegram proposed a military alliance between Germany and Mexico if the USA entered the Great War. The secret diplomatic communication sent by the German Foreign Office was intercepted, deciphered, and revealed to the American public by British intelligence and caused a furor in 1917. What was not then publicly known was how extensive German clandestine operations were in Mexico. These included training an embryonic German-Mexican invasion force, dispatching saboteurs to the U.S., planning submarine bases on the western coast of Mexico, and an idea to launch sea raiders from the port of Mazatlán to attack merchant shipping in the Pacific.

Author Mills weaves a lively story of German Consul Fritz Unger, head of the powerful trading house Melchers Sucesores, and his efforts in Mexico that were thwarted by a top American spy who was a trusted member of the German secret service there. A cast of colorful characters provide drama and intrigue that reads more like a novel but is true history.

Reviewed by Dana Lombardy, publisher of WWOI



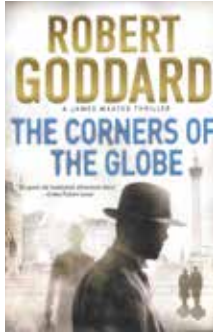
The Ways of the World

By Robert Goddard

The Mysterious Press, 2013

404 pages

ISBN 978-0-8021-2359-6 \$25.00



The Corners of the Globe

By Robert Goddard

The Mysterious Press, 2014

392 pages

ISBN 978-0-8021-2522-4 \$25.00



The Ends of the Earth

By Robert Goddard

The Mysterious Press, 2015

371 pages

ISBN 978-0-8021-2656-6 \$25.00

Kirkus Reviews enthused that the Edgar Award-winning bestselling author Robert Goddard's James Maxted thrillers are "A sophisticated spy story with serious historical chops." Publishers Weekly noted that "Characterization and dialogue are topnotch ... Readers will look forward to seeing these characters spar again."

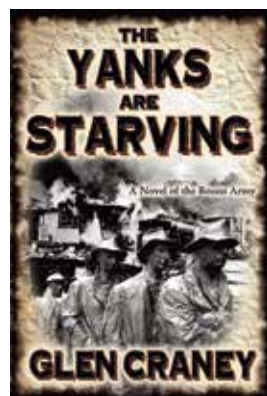
Royal Flying Corps veteran Lieutenant James "Max" Maxted was introduced in the first volume in 2013. His diplomat father Sir Henry is in Paris for the Versailles Treaty and is found dead after a fall from a roof. The French police conclude it's an accident but Max finds evidence of espionage and government double-crossing.

The second volume finds the young ex-aviator working as a double agent as he tries to learn more about his father's murder. Working with legendary German spy Fritz Lemmer, who claims responsibility for Max's father's death, he makes yet more disturbing discoveries.

In the third and final volume the action shifts from Paris and the signing of the Versailles Treaty to Japan, where Max was born. The ending should satisfy fans of Goddard's work.

One of the things to savor in this series is the slower passage of time and information dissemination one hundred years ago. An attempt to outsmart surveillance with changing trains; the need to obtain and protect photographic negatives; and the rare use of weapons are eloquent reminders of how the world has changed.

Reviewed by Anne Merritt



The Yanks Are Starving: A Novel of the Bonus Army

By Glen Craney

Brigid's Fire Press, 2013

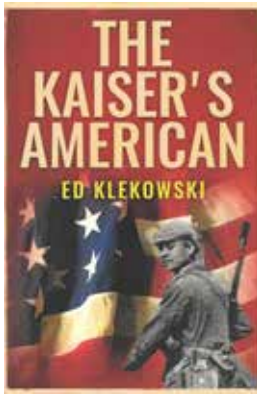
559 pages, maps

ISBN 978-0-9816484-4-6 \$18.99 pb

Glen Craney is an award-winning novelist, screenwriter, and journalist. He is a Chaucer Awards First-Place Winner, a two-time indie BRAG Medallion Honoree, and a three-time Foreword Reviews Book-of-the-Year-Award Finalist. Craney's research for this book included the Daughters of the Texas Republic Library, the UCLA Special Collections Library, and the Raymond H. Fogler Library. Fans of historical fiction should read his books.

Reviewed by Dana Lombardy, publisher of WWOI

Military Writers Society of America: "...a vivid picture of not only men being deprived of their veterans' rights, but of their human rights as well....[an] admirable book."



The Kaiser's American

By Ed Klekowski

Endeavor Press, 2016

291 pages

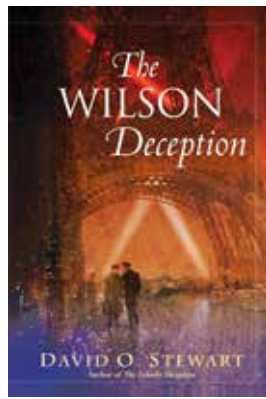
ISBN 978-1-5393-8242-3 \$9.99 pb

This is the story of a Brooklyn man of German descent and his adventures in Belgium in the opening campaign of World War One. It presents an entertaining, almost unbelievable, series of events in compelling detail. Klekowski has written other non-fiction books, including *Americans in Occupied Belgium, 1914-1918*, and created several TV documentaries, including one on WW1 volunteer ambulance drivers.

The protagonist, Paul Meyer, enlisted in the German Navy at the beginning of the war and survives a crash landing of the Zeppelin on which he was serving as an engineer. His American attitudes clash with many in the German military, but somehow he lurches from event to event learning survival skills and giving the reader a look at the chaos behind the front lines of the German advance on the Western Front.

Unfortunately, the author adds lots of historical detail even when it interrupts the story—what eventually happens to famous historical figures who appear briefly in the book does not advance the story. An appendix or afterword would have been more appropriate. Despite this flaw it's a good read.

Reviewed by Anne Merritt



The Wilson Deception

By David O. Stewart

Kensington Books, 2015

226 pages, includes Author's Note

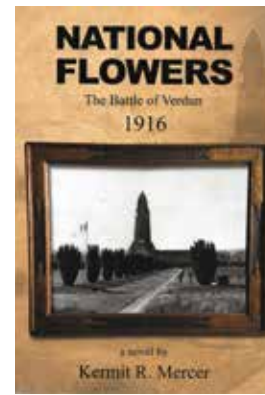
ISBN 978-0-7582-9069-4 \$25.00 pb

Constitutional lawyer David Stewart writes history books about America's early republic, but his novels touch on other eras. This is a mystery/spy thriller that takes place in Paris during the 1919 Versailles Treaty negotiations.

Dr. Jamie Fraser, middle-aged American Expeditionary Force medical officer, is assessing his troubled family life back in the States as he decompresses from the horrors of war. An old friend appears to engage his help in freeing an African American soldier wrongfully convicted of cowardice. Fraser is in the perfect position to do so as he has just accidentally become doctor to both Wilson and Clemenceau.

Stewart captures character traits and speech, although sometimes he leans toward caricature. Fortunately, Stewart creates a story with enough tension and plot twists to keep the reader engrossed and characters the reader can cheer on. Also refreshing is a protagonist who is not your typical young dashing hero. This book would make a good introduction to the era of the Great War for any fan of historical fiction and political intrigue.

Reviewed by Jolie Velazquez



National Flowers:

The Battle of Verdun 1916

By Kermit R. Mercer

Self-published, 2014

369 pages, 2 maps

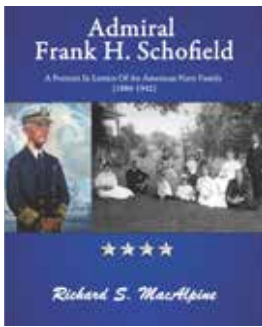
ISBN 978-1-312-04844-7 \$18.38 pb

WWIHA member Kermit Mercer has found a unique way to understand the war with his novel about Verdun based on conversations with World War One *poilus* (French soldiers).

Mercer lived in the Verdun area while serving in the USAF. He got to know many of the veterans when they were in their early 60s and wrote down their stories in the year after he returned home. His notes were not appropriate for a formal history so he turned them into a gripping novel with insights into the hell that was the war's longest battle.

This is not summer beach reading. The long-forgotten details about life in the Verdun trenches are surprising and enlightening, like the need to always hold utensils over a candle before eating to avoid dysentery, or how seasoned *poilus* could tell from the location of shell bursts that an inexperienced German artillery team was at work. In many ways, *National Flowers* is an excellent supplement to the recently translated memoir *Poilu* by Caporal Louis Barthas. This is a novel for the serious historian.

Reviewed by Steve Suddaby, past president of WWIHA

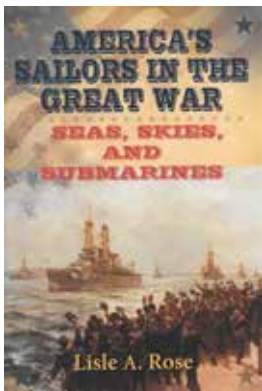


**Admiral Frank H. Schofield:
A Portrait in Letters of an
American Navy Family
(1886-1942)**
By Richard S. MacAlpine
Infinity Publishing, 2016
464 pages, 153 photos and graphics,
index
ISBN 978-1-4958-1185-2 \$27.95

The Naval Historical Foundation declared MacAlpine's book "amazing..." using 12,000 letters plus other documents to tell Schofield's story. Graduating first in the Naval Academy Class of 1890, by 1915 Schofield commanded the Navy's first scout cruiser *Chester* in the Mediterranean, dealing with the Turks during the Armenian troubles.

In 1917 he was on the staff of Admiral William Sims, who commanded U.S. naval forces operating from Britain. His performance in anti-submarine measures led Sims to assign him as a naval advisor in the preparations for the Versailles Treaty of 1919.

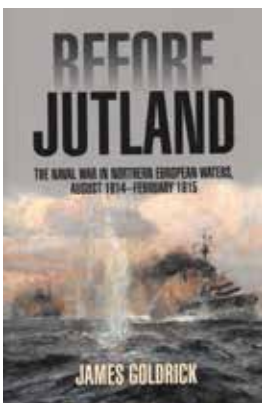
Reviewed by CAPT Richard F. Church, USN (Ret.)



**America's Sailors in the Great
War:
Seas, Skies, and Submarines**
By Lisle A. Rose
University of Missouri Press, 2017
328 pages, maps, photos, index
ISBN 978-0-8262-2105-6 \$36.95

Rose presents both the big picture of the U.S. Navy's role in the war and anecdotes of the individual sailors. Its expansion after the Spanish-American War left the Navy as America's best-prepared force in 1917... building destroyers, sub chasers, and mine layers to counter the submarine threat... only three troop ships were lost and then on lightly escorted return trips while empty of their human cargoes. An excellent introduction.

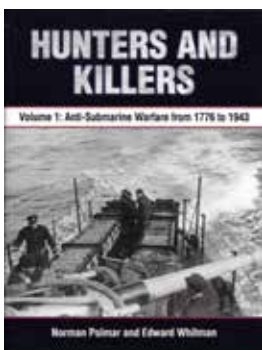
Abridged from review by James M. Gallen in RoadstotheGreatWar-ww1.blogspot.com/



**Before Jutland:
The Naval War in Northern
European Waters, August 1914–
February 1915**
By James Goldrick
Naval Institute Press, 2015
382 pages, maps, photos, index
ISBN 978-1-59114-349-9 \$36.95 pb

A typical USNI comprehensive analysis of actions showing how the British, German, and Russian navies evolved to meet the new challenges of the Great War and whether or not that evolution was successful. Lessons learned in these early actions prevented more ships from being sunk at Jutland, but incoherent national strategies and nonexistent or poorly executed joint planning doomed operations. Goldrick is a retired two-star rear admiral in the Royal Australian Navy and has compiled an excellent history.

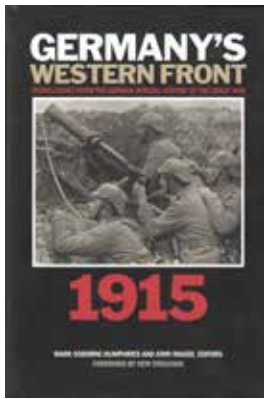
Reviewed by Dana Lombardy, publisher of WWOI



**Hunters and Killers, Volume 1:
Anti-Submarine Warfare from
1776 to 1943**
By Norman Polmar and Edward
Whitman
Naval Institute Press, 2015
210 pages, maps, photos, tables, index
ISBN 978-1-59114-689-6 \$44.95

Part one of a two-volume history of Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW), this book covers the innovative but rudimentary sensors and weapons the Allies used to counter German U-boats in the Atlantic and Mediterranean, although the U-boats were never completely defeated in the Great War. In August 1914 Germany had only 30 operational submarines compared to Britain's 75, France's 50, and Russia's 25. Unrestricted U-boat attacks were curtailed in 1915 in response to protests by the USA. Includes short bios on key scientists and naval leaders. Fine overview.

Reviewed by Dana Lombardy, publisher of WWOI



**Germany's Western Front:
Translations from the German
Official History of the Great
War**

*Edited by Mark Osborne
Humphries and John Maker
Wilfrid Laurier University Press
1914, Part 1: The Battle of the
Frontiers and Pursuit to the
Marne, 2013*

*541 + xxvii pages, maps, tables,
index*

ISBN 978-1-55458-394-2 \$85.00

Volume II: 1915, 2010

*359 + vii pages, maps, tables, index
ISBN 978-1-55458-259-4 \$85.00*

This multi-volume series in six (perhaps seven) parts is the first English-language translation of *Der Weltkrieg*, the German official history of the First World War. It was originally produced between 1925 and 1944 using classified archival records that were destroyed by aerial bombing in April 1945 at the end of the Second World War. This series presents the inside story of Germany's experience on the Western Front. Hopefully, future volumes will cover other fronts.

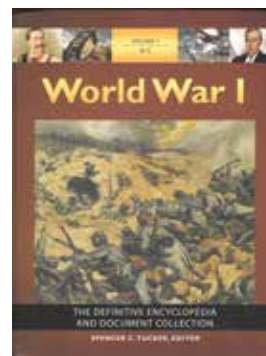
This account by official historians is fundamental to the study of the Great War and official memory in Weimar and Nazi Germany. Although some new document sources have been found in former Soviet archives, the original *Der Weltkrieg* work remains one of the most important resources on Germany in WW1. This translation makes it accessible to English readers.

Confusingly, the 1915 volume was released initially. It has the official explanation of the first use of poison gas against French and Canadian troops at Ypres. It also explains the conflict raging in the German High Command over the political and military direction of the war, setting the stage for Verdun that sealed the fate of the German Supreme Commander, Erich von Falkenhayn.

The 1914 volume is part one of that year, covering the outbreak of war in July–August, the German invasion of Belgium, the Battles of the Frontiers, and the pursuit to the Marne in early September. The first month of war was critical for the German army and, as the official history makes clear, the German war plan was a gamble that seemed to present the only solution to the riddle of the two-front war. But as the Moltke-Schlieffen Plan was gradually jettisoned through a combination of intentional command decisions and confused communications, Germany's hopes for a quick and victory evaporated.

The English editors' extensive footnotes are outstanding and a treasure for researchers. The second part of 1914 is due next, but sadly no dates for it or future volumes could be obtained from the publisher.

Reviewed by Dana Lombardy, publisher of WWOI



**World War I:
The Definitive Encyclopedia
and Document Collection (5
volumes)**

*Edited by Spencer C. Tucker
ABC-CLIO, 2014*

*2,307+ lxvi pages, maps, photos,
tables, index*

ISBN 978-1-85109-964-1

\$520.00

An eBook version is available

Full disclosure: This reviewer contributed to ABC-CLIO's previous *The Encyclopedia of World War II* (2005) and *The Civil War encyclopedia* (2013), but did not write for this WW1 series.

A host of knowledgeable experts provided the entries that form the basis of this massive work. Spencer Tucker, the series editor, is an award-winning author or editor of 49 books and encyclopedias. A former U.S. Army captain and intelligence analyst at the Pentagon, he retired from teaching at the Virginia Military Institute in Lexington.

Each of the first four volumes consists of maps followed by alphabetically-organized entries. The first volume also includes three special essays: *The Origins of World War I*; *The Outbreak of World War I (after June 28, 1914)*; and *World War I Overview*.

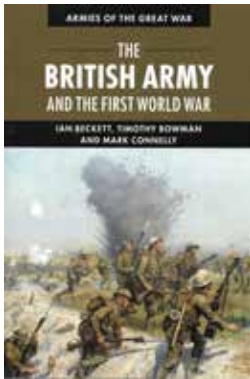
The fifth volume presents 207 key primary source documents, organized by dates, including pre-war and post-war periods. For example, Document 42 presents the report of German U-9 commander Lieutenant Otto Weddigen, who sank three British cruisers in the first major submarine engagement of the war on 22 September 1914, juxtaposed against the report by Royal Navy Commander Bertram W.L. Nicholson who was on the *Cressy*, one of the cruisers that was lost.

Other documents include official treaties and communiqués such as President Woodrow Wilson's correspondence with the German government in 1918, and even famous popular items such as Canadian surgeon John McCrae's poem "In Flanders Fields" published in the British magazine *Punch* in December 1915.

A few entries have become outdated by recent research and scholarship and the maps are often too general, not even identifying armies let alone subordinate units. Using a modern tank silhouette to indicate Ottoman mobile howitzer battalions on the Gallipoli-Dardanelles map in volume two (page 635) looks very odd as well as anachronistic.

Despite these minor complaints, these volumes sit on a shelf within easy reach of my desk. I refer to them regularly as a starting point and/or fact-checking reference. They are indispensable to my work. Highly recommended for anyone with a serious interest in the study of the First World War.

Reviewed by Dana Lombardy, publisher of WWOI



**Armies of the Great War:
The British Army and the First
World War**

By Ian Beckett, Timothy Bowman and
Mark Connelly

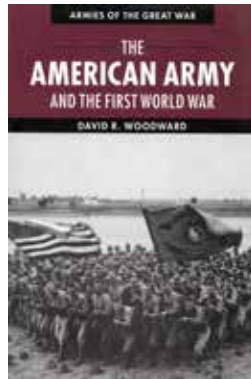
Cambridge University Press, 2017
476 + vii pages, maps, photos, index
ISBN 978-0-521-18374-1 \$29.99 pb

This volume was a collaborative effort of three professors at the University of Kent. Unlike the other volumes of this series reviewed in this issue, this one has no statistical tables; unfortunate since there are anecdotal numbers presented throughout the narrative.

It assesses the strengths and weaknesses of the British Army between 1914 and 1918, and discusses debates about the adequacy of British generalship and the so-called “learning curve” in combat operations. Their conclusion is that despite limitations of initiative and innovation among the British high command, the British Army succeeded in developing effective combined arms warfare necessary for achieving victory in 1918.

The Western Front receives the lion’s share of attention with British Army operations “throughout the rest of the world” relegated to 26 pages. The index has “BEF, See British Expeditionary Force” but there is no such listing which means any pages where the BEF’s changing organization, such as the increase in machine-guns per battalion and decrease in battalions per division are lost (or nonexistent).

Reviewed by Dana Lombardy,
publisher of *WVOI*



**Armies of the Great War:
The American Army and the First
World War**

By David R. Woodward

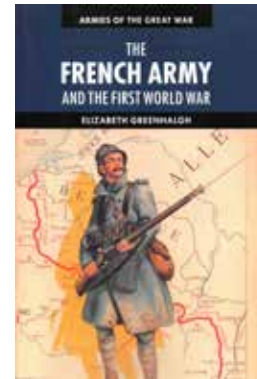
Cambridge University Press, 2014
465 + xviii pages, maps, photos, tables,
index
ISBN 978-1-107-64886-9 \$34.99 pb

The Journal of Military History review declared this “a well-researched and nicely written volume for the ‘Armies of the Great War’ series.” It went on to say “One of the major strengths of this work is the careful integration of the context in which the American Army is roughly jerked out of its wary complacency....”

David Woodward, an Emeritus Professor of History at Marshall University, covers the American Expeditionary Forces’ battles at the Saint-Mihiel salient, the Meuse-Argonne offensive, and the experiences of U.S. soldiers in Russia and Siberia. American politics, Allied debates about various strategies, and the arguments and negotiations among the coalition partners are also examined, especially on how the U.S. divisions were integrated into the Allied order of battle.

Professor Woodward’s overview is supported by seven statistical and organizational tables. The maps are adapted from *the American Armies and Battlefields in Europe, 1938* published by the American Battlefield Monuments Commission.

Reviewed by Dana Lombardy,
publisher of *WVOI*



**Armies of the Great War:
The French Army and the First
World War**

By Elizabeth Greenhalgh

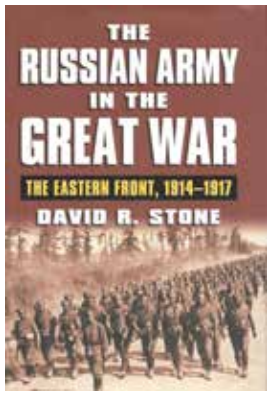
Cambridge University Press, 2014
469 + xv pages, maps, photos, tables, index
ISBN 978-1-107-60568-8 \$30.99 pb

The Journal of Military History review was mixed on this volume. The reviewer noted it is “a great primer for ... learning more about the French” army, but also “It is imperfect, sometimes could go into more depth, and makes a few minor errors....”

What are these “minor” errors? Elizabeth Greenhalgh, a QE II Research Fellow at the University of New South Wales in Australia, makes regrettable and “irreconcilable” mistakes in French casualty figures, and misses important aspects of French artillery; for example, referring to French guns only by their caliber and not by their make. Artillery was a huge factor in the Great War, so knowing if a 155-mm cannon was the 1882 de Bange model that fired one aimed round per minute or the 1905 model Rimailho capable of ten to fifteen aimed rounds per minute is a big deal.

Her analysis of the French view of British BEF commander Haig as selfish and uncooperative is interesting, and her section on the French mutinies was called “the best treatment of the phenomenon in English” by the *JMH* reviewer.

Reviewed by Dana Lombardy,
publisher of *WVOI*



The Russian Army in the Great War:

The Eastern Front, 1914-1917

By David R. Stone

University Press of Kansas, 2015

359 + vii pages, maps, photos, index

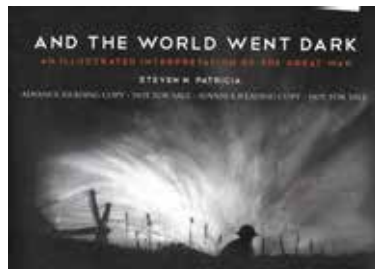
ISBN 978-0-7006-2095-1 \$34.95

Histories of the Eastern Front in WW1 written and published in the West have relied upon German and Austrian sources, supplemented by writings of Russian exiles. David Stone was able to access Russian archives, including Soviet staff studies published after 1918, but he admits that some statistical data are still difficult if not impossible to obtain due to disorganized record keeping and the chaos of the revolution.

This is an illuminating and outstanding source book, as well as an engaging narrative of a major theater of the war not well known and underappreciated. Russia's importance is evident in Germany's decision to keep 47 of its 89 divisions in the East despite the launch of attacks in the West in the spring of 1918. Even in defeat, Russia played a role in weakening Germany's offensive ability.

The review in *The Journal of Military History* noted that Stone "very deftly weaves into the narrative what the forces of the Central Powers were doing in reaction to and in anticipation of Russian strategy and tactics."

Reviewed by Dana Lombardy,
publisher of WWOI



**And the World Went Dark:
An Illustrated Interpretation of
the Great War**

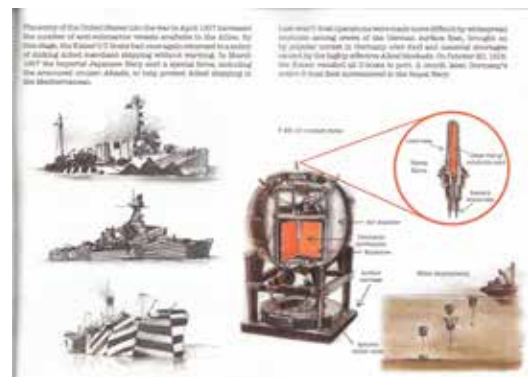
By Steven N. Patricia

Casemate Publishers, 2016

96 pages, sepia and color illustrations,
bibliography

ISBN 978-1-61200-348-1 \$25.00 pb

Short but comprehensive summary of WW1 illustrated throughout (see sample pages). The author, an artist and historian, offers a thoughtful, elegant, and inclusive history of the Great War with well-presented data and illustrations that work together to incorporate the information while conveying the sense of the times.

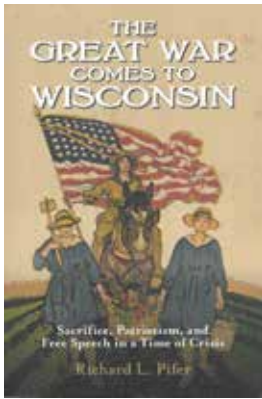


The format is similar to a graphic novel, but as written by a scholar. The title references the famous quote by British Foreign Secretary Sir Edward Grey in 1914: "The lamps are going out all over Europe: we shall not see them lit again in our lifetime."

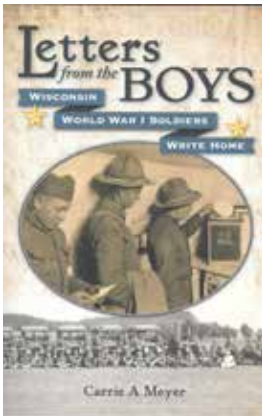
The book is organized into six parts: an Introduction outlines the forces that led to war and the (major) "players" plus three chapters called "Acts" that describe the war in the air, at sea, and on land. A short summary chapter called "Finis" explains why and how the war ended. The bibliography indicates the amount of research used to assure the accuracy of the illustrations, but an index would have made it easier to locate key points and quotes.

This is the book I would give to a young reader or an adult who is interested in learning more about the war. A most impressive effort!

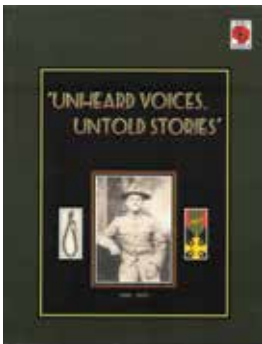
Reviewed by Anne Merritt



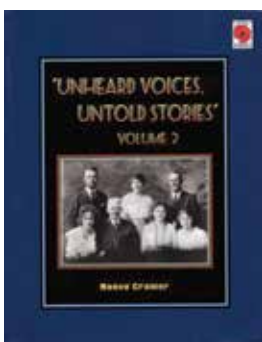
The Great War Comes to Wisconsin: Sacrifice, Patriotism, and Free Speech in a Time of Crisis
 By Richard L. Pifer
 Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 2017
 286 pages, 2 maps, photos, political cartoons and posters, index
 ISBN 978-0-87020-782-2 \$26.95 pb



Letters From the Boys: Wisconsin World War I Soldiers Write Home
 By Carrie A. Meyer
 Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 2018
 223 pages, 2 maps, photos, newspaper and poster images, index
 ISBN 978-0-87020-851-5 \$19.95 pb



Unheard Voices, Untold Stories
 By Nancy J. Cramer
 Walsworth Publishing Company, 2015
 163 pages, 1 map, photos, period images
 ISBN 978-0-9857603-1-1 \$12.50 pb



Unheard Voices, Untold Stories, Volume 2
 By Nancy J. Cramer
 Walsworth Publishing Company, 2015
 176 pages, 2 maps, photos, period images
 ISBN 978-0-9857603-2-8 \$12.50 pb

Political support for the war was weak in the Midwest in general and nowhere more so than in Wisconsin. Dubbed “The Traitor State,” its Senator Robert LaFollette became the voice and face of opposition to the war. But many Wisconsin residents served in the 32nd Division, “Les Terribles,” that fought from 30 July to 20 October 1918. It suffered the third highest number of casualties among American divisions.

I recommend this for anyone with an interest in the effect of the war on America’s home front.

Abridged from review by James M. Gallen in RoadstotheGreatWar-ww1.blogspot.com/

A collection of letters published in newspapers starting in 1917. Despite opposition to the war in Wisconsin, only 2 percent of eligible young men failed to register for the draft. Men from Wisconsin and Michigan formed the 32nd Division, a National Guard unit that was the sixth division to arrive in France. Seven thousand of its soldiers were transferred to the 1st (Regular Army) Division to provide replacements for casualties, but eventually the 32nd fought as an independent unit. These letters provide an interesting and sometimes humorous glimpse of their experiences.

Reviewed by Dana Lombardy, publisher of WWOI

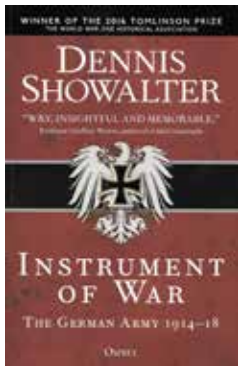
An interesting collection of documents and interviews with family members of deceased WW1 veterans. The author’s volunteer work at the National World War I Museum in Kansas City both inspired her and provided access to archives and artifacts to help assemble these two books.

Stories cover 35 categories including New Immigrants, American Nurses, Poison Gas, Veterinary Hospitals, African-American Troops, Engineers and Pioneers, Army of Occupation, After the War, Songs of World War I, and more. Cramer is a good writer who shows sympathy for her subjects.

One example is a letter from Private John Lewis Barkley who wrote to his brother from France about a combat action on 7 October 1918—a rare occurrence considering that censors usually deleted such details. Cramer unites Barkley’s letter and photograph with the U.S. War Department’s official description of his actions that led him to receiving the Medal of Honor.

As reference books, however, these two volumes suffer from a lack of an index and footnotes, making it difficult to cite them for other works. They are still entertaining reads.

Reviewed by Dana Lombardy, publisher of WWOI



**Instrument of War:
The German Army 1914-18**

By Dennis Showalter

Osprey Publishing, 2016

304 pages, photos, index

ISBN 978-1-4728-1300-8 \$30.00

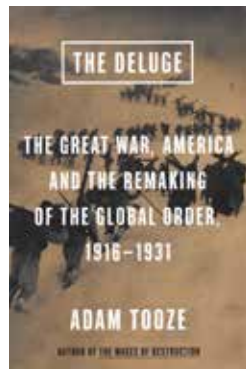
Winner of the 2016 Tomlinson
Book Prize Award

This is not a chronological presentation of campaigns and battles with maps and combat statistics, yet it is perhaps one of the most important books written about the German Army in WW1.

Dennis Showalter, author of *Tannenberg: Clash of Empires, 1914* (Brassey's, 2004), was recently chosen for the Pritzker Literature Award for Lifetime Achievement in Military Writing. He has spent more than 50 years researching and teaching military history. This book represents his fresh perspective on the German Army during WW1. It explores that army's internal dynamics and operational strategy, showing how both the army and nation were changed by war.

By 1916 the German Army had proved itself as "the Great War's most comprehensively effective fighting force...." But "Strategic planning was not its forte. Its high command's record was at best questionable." And "after eighteen months, without any reasonable doubt fighting a war of attrition ... [it] could not win." Showalter concludes "the kaiser's army ... existed not to serve state and society but to sustain [itself].... A recipe for defeat and dissolution." Highly recommended.

Reviewed by Dana Lombardy,
publisher of *WWOI*



**The Deluge:
The Great War, America and the
Remaking of the Global Order
1916-1931**

By Adam Tooze

Viking Penguin, 2014

644 pages, illustrations, maps, tables,
index

ISBN 978-0-670-02492-6 \$40.00

Winner of the 2015 Los Angeles
Times Book Prize

Author Tooze, a previous winner of the (UK) Wolfson Foundation History Prize, has written a richly detailed book of how France and Great Britain, working with the United States, formed a workable triumvirate that won the war in 1918, only to have it unravel over the following decade. *The Deluge* tackles the big picture from Tooze's chosen turning point in the Great War and America's economic rise to a major world power.

The *New York Times* review called it "Splendid interpretive history." Reviewer Gary D. Bass explained, "Rather than starting at a conventional moment like the outbreak of World War I, Tooze begins midstream in 1916 – the year of the gory battles of Verdun and the Somme, but also the year when the economic output of the United States exceeded that of the British Empire. From then until today, writes Tooze, a professor of history at Yale, American economic might would be the decisive factor in the shaping of the world order."

Professor Kevin Matthews of George Mason University stated in his review that "On reflection, America's emergence should have

surprised no one. As Paul Kennedy pointed out in *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*, by 1900 the United States was already the world's leading manufacturing power, with Britain and Germany battling for second place. So, a change was coming; sooner or later, the world's financial and political centre of gravity would cross the Atlantic. What no one could have predicted was how sudden this move would be, a suddenness that 'was a product of the Great War' (pp. 40–1)."

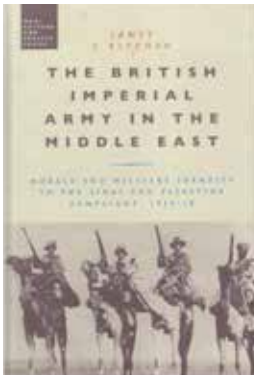
President Woodrow Wilson so distrusted the European leaders that he offered his own 14 points and peace without victory, infuriating his two allies. Wilson was not interested in joining the Europeans in ruling the world, preferring his idea of a League of Nations.

Bass summarized: "So Tooze narrates the tumultuous and violent 1920s as a heartbreakingly avoidable tragedy, with the big democracies needlessly squandering their supremacy. Above all, grand liberal projects would never succeed without American engagement. With the United States emerging exponentially more powerful from the war, France and Britain would need its support to deter possible new German aggression. Even when the United States refused to assert itself, Tooze argues, the interwar order 'was defined in large part by the absent presence of its most defining element — the new power of the United States.'"

America's lack of engagement in world affairs left other nations to struggle with their own rebuilding. Many chose protective tariffs, a return to the gold standard, and austerity to pay down war debt. These decisions meant a post-war recession became the Great Depression as less money and limited credit left nothing to help rebuild.

The *Deluge* is an enormously worthwhile book, worldwide in scope, and recommended reading.

Reviewed by Anne Merritt



The British Imperial Army in the Middle East: Morale and Military Identity in the Sinai and Palestine Campaigns, 1916-1918

By James E. Kitchen

Bloomsbury Academic, 2014

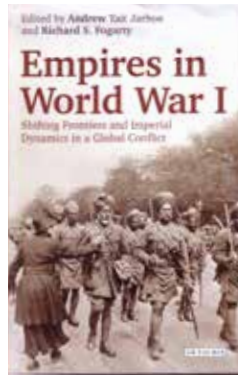
320 + xiii pages, illustrations, maps, index
ISBN 978-1-4742-4785-6 \$39.93 pb

The 1918 battles in the Sinai and Palestine ultimately destroyed the Ottoman Empire and paved the way for the British and French to redraw the Middle East map and create the unstable nations whose dramas still give indigestion to diplomats a century later.

This excellent book has received numerous accolades, including Kristian Ulrichsen in the *Journal of Palestine Studies*: “Kitchen’s meticulously researched book makes extensive use of primary source materials ranging from contemporary soldiers’ letters and official (and unofficial) documentation to postwar memoirs and oral historiography.”

When General Sir Edmund Allenby assumed command from the lackluster Archibald Murray in the fall of 1917, he injected new confidence into a demoralized staff officer corps and vastly improved training. Fresh reinforcements of newly recruited British Indian Army formations performed well in the battles against the still formidable Ottoman Army.

Reviewed by Len Shurtleff, former president of WW1HA



Empires in World War I: Shifting Frontiers and Imperial Dynamics in a Global Conflict

By Andrew Jarboe & Richard Fogarty (eds.)

I.B. Tauris, London, 2014

379 + xii pages, photos, graphs, references, index

ISBN 978-1-7807-6440-5 \$145.00

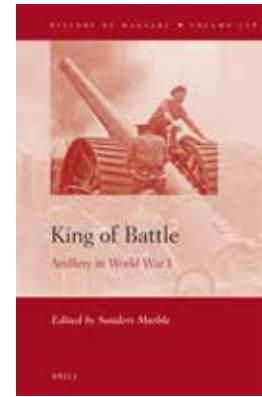
This anthology moves away from the decisive Western Front to dwell upon the ramifications of the war on outlying, but not necessarily peripheral areas of the globe. These essays range from Europe, the Indian subcontinent and Japan, through the Pacific Islands, North and sub-Saharan Africa to the Caribbean.

Just one example in West Africa details how the French focused on recruiting cannon fodder and controlled popular unrest. African citizens of the four communes of Senegal elected a representative to the National Assembly and served in the French metropolitan army and received French pay and allowances; other colonial subjects were conscripted into the *Tirailleurs Senegalais* at lower pay and allowances.

The WW1 service of many colonial troops led to demands for self-rule, but for most that dream would not be fulfilled until after WW2.

Dennis Showalter praised the book: “...the author’s success in presenting case studies and niche studies in a genuinely global context. The result is a major contribution....”

Len Shurtleff, former president of WW1HA



King of Battle: Artillery in World War I

Edited by Sanders Marble

Brill, 2015

380 + xiv pages, map, photos, tables, index
ISBN 978-1-0043-0524-3 \$209.00

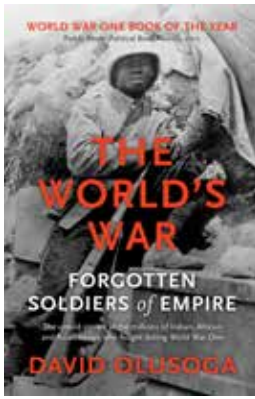
As the editor points out in his preface, “Artillery dominated the battlefields of World War I.... Artillery even holds the dubious distinction of causing a new diagnosis, shellshock.” Despite its crucial role in the conflict and since, and numerous books about the types and capabilities of weapons, this is the first major work that compares national organizations, new technologies, and evolving training and doctrine.

A distinguished array of authors examines the battlefield artillery—the guns that would be included in fire plans. Mortars are covered to some degree, but naval artillery is excluded. Coastal artillery, anti-aircraft, and anti-tank guns receive limited attention.

The essays included in this volume explain how the major combatants of Britain, France, Russia, Germany, Austria-Hungary, and the United States handled artillery and how it affected the Great War. Additional chapters explore the artillery of the Ottoman Empire, Bulgaria, Italy, India, Serbia, and Romania.

This is an essential book for anyone trying to understand combat and the competition for increased firepower and its application from 1914-1918.

Reviewed by Dana Lombardy, publisher of WWOI



**The World's War:
Forgotten Soldiers of Empire**

By David Olusoga

Head of Zeus, London, 2014

462 + xv pages, illustrations, index

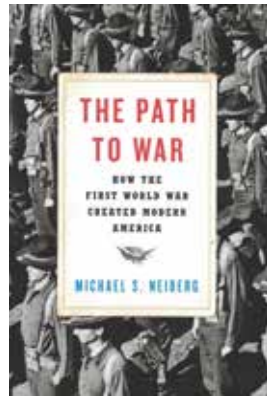
ISBN 978-1-7818-5897-4 £20.00

Winner of the (UK) Political Book Awards 2015 World War One Book of the Year

This is a very good book. Olusoga rightly demonstrates that World War One was a multi-racial, multi-imperial conflict, waged in Asia and Africa as well as on better known fronts. This point has been largely downplayed by previous historians who inaccurately depict the war as “all white.” Olusoga argues that what made the 1914-1918 conflict a “world” war was that it pulled in men and resources from across the globe. This was primarily because most of the major Western combatant countries possessed large overseas empires comprising millions of Asian and African subjects. Even the US—that did not—deployed thousands of its racially-downtrodden African-American citizens in the war. The harrowing story of the nearly 140,000 Chinese laborers on the Western Front is finally told.

Written as a vigorous narrative that mercifully avoids boring academic locution, Olusoga reveals the story of four million non-European, non-white participants in “the war that will end war.” This book deserves a place in every World War One buff’s library. Its 63 telling illustrations are a treat.

Reviewed by Chandar Sundaram



**The Path to War:
How the First World War Created
Modern America**

By Michael S. Neiberg

Oxford University Press, 2016

313 pages, photos, cartoons, index

ISBN 978-0-1904-6496-7 \$29.95

Winner of the 2016 Tomlinson Book Prize Award

Neiberg takes a bottom-up approach toward understanding why America finally associated itself with the Entente in the fight against Germany. His major thesis is that Americans were way ahead of the government, and especially President Woodrow Wilson, in understanding that we had to be part of the war “to save civilization” and suppress Germany’s aggressive ambitions.

Memoirs, newspaper columns, magazine articles, private and public letters, and the speeches of Preparedness advocates show us the organic change taking place from 1914 to 1917 in our so-called isolationist population, and how the pressure from ordinary people, and his own advisers, dragged Wilson to a place he did not want to go.

Neiberg’s refreshing viewpoint emphasizing the idealism, thoughtfulness, and good sense of the American public is certainly persuasive. Once again, his natural writing style makes this book an enjoyable as well as informative endeavor that I can recommend without hesitation.

Abridged from review by Jolie Velazquez in *RoadstotheGreatWar-ww1.blogspot.com/*



**Ottomans and Armenians:
A Study in Counterinsurgency**

By Edward J. Erickson

Palgrave MacMillan, 2013

299 + xiii pages, maps, figures, appendix, index

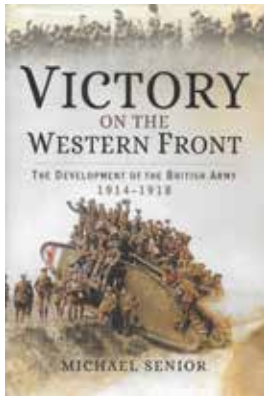
ISBN 978-1-137-36220-9 \$105.00

Erickson’s book was called “courageous and provocative” by Tomlinson prize-winner Sean McMeekin. It offers a counterinsurgency military explanation for the 1915 relocation of the Armenians in eastern Turkey.

Erickson documents the beginning of the Armenian insurgency with the secret committees of the 1890s and their evolution into the Armenian armed resistance. When the Ottomans launched an offensive against Russia in late 1914 a small number of Armenians in the eastern provinces of Turkey rose in revolt and menaced the vulnerable Ottoman rail link to the Caucasus front. Threatened in the Dardanelles by Great Britain and France, pressured in the South by British forces, the Ottoman Army countered the Armenian uprising using population relocation.

A successful counterinsurgency strategy against the Armenians became a public relations nightmare as thousands of Armenians were massacred or simply died of exposure during their relocation. The Ottomans were and remain defiant in defending their actions. The “Armenian genocide” remains highly controversial.

Reviewed by Anne Merritt



**Victory on the Western Front:
The Development of the British
Army 1914-1918**

By Michael Senior

Pen and Sword Military, 2016

238 + xvii pages, maps, illustrations,
appendix, index

ISBN 978-1-78340-065-2 \$44.95

Available in the U.S. through Casemate
Publishers

Michael Senior identifies and analyzes why the development of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) was “extraordinary” and shows how they led to the British Army becoming an infinitely more efficient force by 1918 than it had been in 1914.

Although written in an impressively lucid style, this is not a quick read... [and] there’s a danger, I think, that a reader unfamiliar with the truly global nature of WWI may come away from the book with the impression that this war was primarily Britain’s war.

Most of the book is devoted to technical improvements within the Royal Flying Corps, munitions, trenches, tanks, and artillery. Ultimately, *Victory on the Western Front* is a convincing antidote against the popular “Lions led by Donkeys” attitude toward the Great War that has sometimes been in vogue. It’s a well-written and well-organized book. All in all, an excellent read for those whose WWI interests include the workings of the British Expeditionary Force from 1914 to 1918.

Abridged from review by David F. Beer in *RoadstotheGreatWar-ww1.blogspot.com/*



**The Last Battle:
Victory, Defeat, and the End of
World War I**

By Peter Hart

Oxford University Press, 2018

431 + x pages, maps, index

ISBN 978-0-19-087298-4 \$34.95 pb

The author is an oral historian at the Imperial War Museum in London and has access to large archives of original testimonies.... describing and enlivening the final battles of 1918.

He does admit that his “emphasis as a British historian is on the British Army with an appreciative reflection on the massive contributions of victory made by the French, American and Belgian forces.”

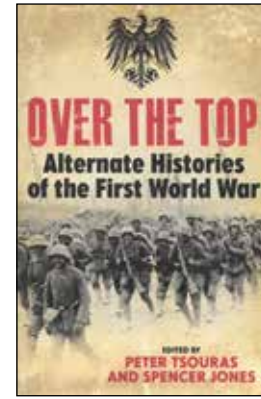
Politics and personalities involved in the cease-fire agreements were complex and often cantankerous.... [and left] “an unpleasant taste in the mouth when one considers that men were being maimed and dying in huge numbers....”

Ironically, it didn’t take long before the business of “battlefield tourism” began to flourish.... [while veterans now] “had to fight to retain their self-respect in a society that did not seem to care one iota for their welfare.”

This is a rich and comprehensive book, one I can certainly recommend.

Abridged from review by David F. Beer in *RoadstotheGreatWar-ww1.blogspot.com/*

New York Journal of Books: “...an exceptional collection of personal narratives....”



**Over the Top:
Alternate Histories of the First
World War**

Edited by Peter Tsouras and Spencer Jones

Frontline Books (Pen and Sword), 2014

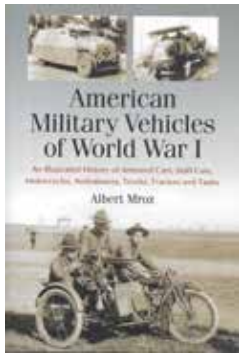
210 + xxix pages, maps, photos, index

ISBN 978-1-84832-753-5 \$39.95

One of the intellectual challenges and delights of reading history is imagining how past events could have followed different paths. This anthology offers ten short alternate histories, each driven by a single change to the First World War’s actual history. In one the Brusilov Offensive is more successful than it was, as the Russian Empire defeats the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and as a result the 1917 Russian Revolution never occurs. [Others] include a German breakthrough at the First Battle of Ypres (1914), a British amphibious attack on the Ottoman port of Alexandretta, the Greeks joining the Entente at Gallipoli to seize Istanbul, Teddy Roosevelt elected president in 1912 and taking America into the war in 1915, a clear British victory at Jutland, a clear British victory at the Somme, plus an earlier and more massive deployment of tanks on the Western Front.

The deviations from history are thought provoking, giving readers a good sense of just how many different ways the Great War could have gone, and shedding insight into strategic decision-making.

Abridged from review by Bryan Alexander in *RoadstotheGreatWar-ww1.blogspot.com/*



American Military Vehicles of World War I: An Illustrated History of Armored Cars, Staff Cars, Motorcycles, Ambulances, Trucks, Tractors and Tanks

By Albert Mroz
 McFarland & Company, 2009
 316 + x pages, photos and images, chronology, index
 ISBN 978-0-7864-3960-7 \$35.00 pb

Hundreds of b&w photos, images of advertisements, and technical drawings appear throughout this outstanding book that examines American motor vehicles used in WW1.

The author researched a wide variety of sources, including the American Truck Historical Society, the Art Archives at the Imperial War Museum, the Society of Automotive Historians, and the National World War I Museum in Kansas City, to name just a few. As the basis for the text, Mroz reprinted portions of prior articles he wrote that appeared in magazines such as American History, Autoweek, Army Motors, Militaria International and others.

Although not as exciting or as popular as tanks and armored cars, a standardized truck to haul supplies and men, and to tow artillery and other items was critical to the war effort. American industry was able to produce only 9,364 Liberty trucks by the November 1918 Armistice. A July 1917 magazine editorialized that taking so long to design and approve a standard truck for the Army was "shameful."

Reviewed by Dana Lombardy, publisher of WWOI



Duel #85: Zeppelin vs British Home Defence 1915-18, 2018

By Jon Guttman
 ISBN 978-1-4728-2033-4 \$20.00 pb

Editor's Note: Osprey Publishing's "versus" books cover many historical eras and weapon systems, from *Ancient Roman Legionary versus Carthaginian Warrior* (Combat #35) to *F-15C Eagle vs MiG 23/25* (Duel #72).

Each of these splendid studies contain 80 pages, photos, color illustrations and often color maps, a bibliography that sometimes includes foreign language sources, and a useful index despite their small size. The authors include PhD historians to veterans familiar with the weapon systems.

These publications should not be dismissed as something for "specialists" or hobbyists. These excellent books provide a unique view of soldiers, aircraft, or tanks, detailed images and notes on equipment and organization, plus show how tactics actually worked on the battlefield.

For World War One, two of the titles of this series are shown here. They include a study of Zeppelins over England by noted aviation historian and author Jon Guttman, research director for History.net, and U.S. Army veteran and National Security PhD Robert Forczyk's book on German and Russian infantrymen on the Eastern Front, reviewed at right.



Combat #11: 1914-15 German Infantryman versus Russian Infantryman, 2015

By Robert Forczyk
 ISBN 978-1-4728-0654-3 \$18.95 pb

Robert Forczyk's book on combat in East Prussia in the opening months of the war is a thorough and illuminating work on a subject commonly misinterpreted or ignored. The sources reveal never-before-seen photos, detailed battlefield maps, and artist renditions of what the combatants looked like.

Forczyk provides a superb analysis of tactics and combat performance at three battles: Gumbinnen (20 August 1914), Goritten (7 November 1914) and Mahartse (16 February 1915). He examines the evolving nature of infantry warfare on the Eastern Front. Central to the tactical portrayal of the battles fought are Russian- and German language sources rarely seen in the West. The accounts on the battle of Gumbinnen alone make the book worthwhile.

Abridged from review by Terrence Finnegan in RoadstotheGreatWar-ww1.blogspot.com/

#1



#2



#3



#4



#5



#6



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#2

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Iron Man: Rudolf Berthold [German Ace] by Peter Kilduff
Ring of Steel [Germany and Austria-Hungary] by Alexander Watson

A Mad Catastrophe [Collapse of Habsburg Empire] by Geoffrey Wawro

#3

The Great War Dawning [German Army in 1914] by Frank Buchholz, Joe & Janet Robinson

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#5

'A Delicate Affair' on the Western Front [Battle of Seicheprey] Terrence J. Finnegan
The First World War in the Middle East by Kristian Coates Ulrichsen