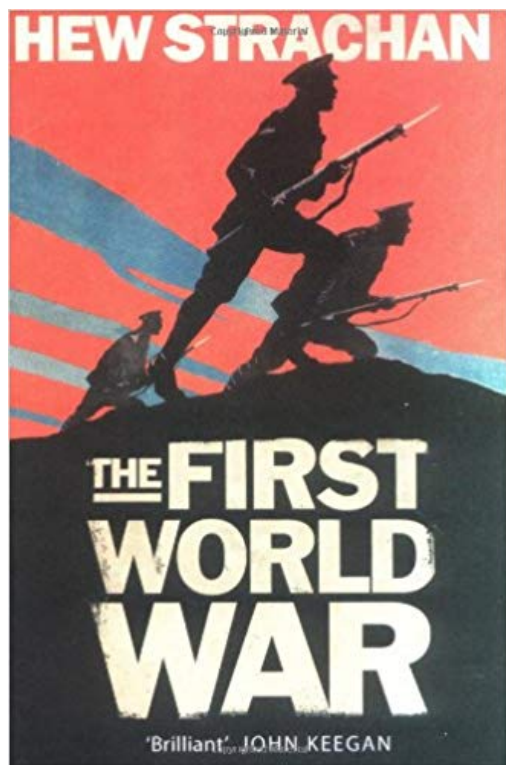


The First World War *by* Hew Strachan



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Reviews of the *The First World War* by Hew Strachan

Fearlessrunner

Actions from misunderstandings have plagued and haunted mankind with war since Cain rose up and killed his brother Abel... only the number of victims and methods of killing have changed.

The pictures in the book were not reproduced well. But the book was a great read.

Cobyno

Hew Strachan is my favorite author on the study of WWI. I have the book plus the documentary film based on his book... both that I treasure.

The film, too, is just excellent. The history, dialogue, seeing these citizens and soldiers living life

nearly 100 years ago. One really interesting moment in the film is when it shows a little 14 year-old-boy, his diary with wonderfully drawn pictures of the town and his home. The film then shows those scenes as they look in real life today, still the same.

Amazing pictures. As readable as a novel except this is a painfully true story.

You won't be sorry with either the film or the book.

Mayno

The only reason I didn't give this five stars is that it includes very little "interpretative" material. It is the one-volume version of an eventual three-volume masterwork. Strachan is one of the leading scholars of The First World War, if not THE leading scholar. The writing is lively, not dry. But the avalanche of detail, battle upon battle, is oppressive. To be fair, this is partly "battle fatigue" on the part of the reader. It's not Strachan's fault (the book is half the length of other WWI histories). But I well imagine one could focus mostly on interpretation, refer to a "timeline," and not get worn down by the weight of this senseless slaughter in the telling of it. I am running a World War One Book Club to commemorate the centennial next year, and after Strachan we all agreed we needed a novel as relief. Having just finished *All Quiet on the Western Front* (a well-deserved classic, for sure!), I can attest that this subject reduces everyone who gets involved with it to an existential blob. It is truly no.man's.land.

Dynen

This book brings some new perspectives to a period of history that has been written about. Also, it is the broadest perspective of this war that I have ever read. The ideas initiated at the beginning of this book, that this war led to a lot of the events of the 20th century even to today is a fresh perspective that made the book interesting. The book builds on that premise very well. Some examples that are highlighted: the events of the middle east. One of the chapters uses the term Jihad. The Balkans - the continual consolidation and break up of these countries is a continual source of conflict. And the mixed religions has caused this also. Some other areas are well known - including the Russian revolution and fall of the dynasties. All in all this is an interesting book and well worth the read for any individual interested in history.

Kelerana

Excellent readable book. It explains the setting and causes of this war. It explains the impact and limitations of so many strategic and tactical factors. It discusses the development of senior staffs to coordinate the massive movements that the railroads afforded. It discusses the power and limitations of artillery when communications are so easily disrupted. These types of background materials make it easier to understand the battle descriptions.

Coiril

Excellent book! Absolutely riveting!

Ballardana

I recently became interested (I'm a history buff) in learning more about WWI, since my knowledge is limited of that time period and conflict. I went on line and researched some books covering that era, and this was one of the books I saw mentioned favorably. I had just finished "The Guns of August" by Pulitzer Prize winner Barbara Tuchman and was hoping for something similar, but "The First World War" didn't quite compare. I thought this book read more like a textbook...I think it would probably fulfill that role well. I was a little disappointed in the maps showing the different campaigns/battles; I thought they were in some cases difficult to read. On the positive side, the use of photos throughout the book added some important context to the story. In general, I thought Strachan did a good job of covering a vast subject in a reasonable amount of space. I would recommend this book to a student who is studying WWI, but it might not be for a casual reader like me.

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