



The First World War

Cyril Falls

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The years 1914 to 1918 saw Europe engaged in a conflict involving a greater area and a greater number of men than history had ever before recorded. In this book, Captain Cyril Falls, known in British academic and governmental circles as an expert in military history, discusses the military side of World War I in the light of its battles, tactics and weapons; its problems of supply and transport; its armies and their commanders. The engagements in the many theaters of war in Europe, Asia and Africa are described in vivid detail, but particular attention is focused on the Western Front, where the principal and decisive battles were fought. Although it was on land that the conclusive victories were achieved, the place of sea power and of the new type of warfare waged in the air is not ignored. The role played by civilian politics is covered as well, particularly in situations where it had direct bearing on the fighting--such as in Sarajevo in 1914 where a spark touched off the Central European powder keg and signaled the beginning of the war; the political considerations which caused the US as well as Romania, Bulgaria, and Italy to enter the war late; and the revolution which caused Russia to leave it early. In telling how World War I was fought and why it developed as it did, Captain Falls decisively refutes the notion that World War I was an interlude of senseless and irresponsible slaughter during which military art stood still. He reminds us that it was a war remarkable for the idealistic spirit in which it was fought. Though the unprecedented, world-wide scale of battle, and the deadlock on the Western Front, taxed the skill of military leadership sorely, the war produced its great leaders: Haig, Allenby, Maude, Jellicoe, Beatty, Joffre, Foch, Petain, Pershing, Liggett, Sims, Falkenhayn, Hindenburg, Hipper, Conrad von Hotzendorf, and Mustapha Kemal. Their achievements as well as the indomitable spirit of the men they commanded are remembered here.

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