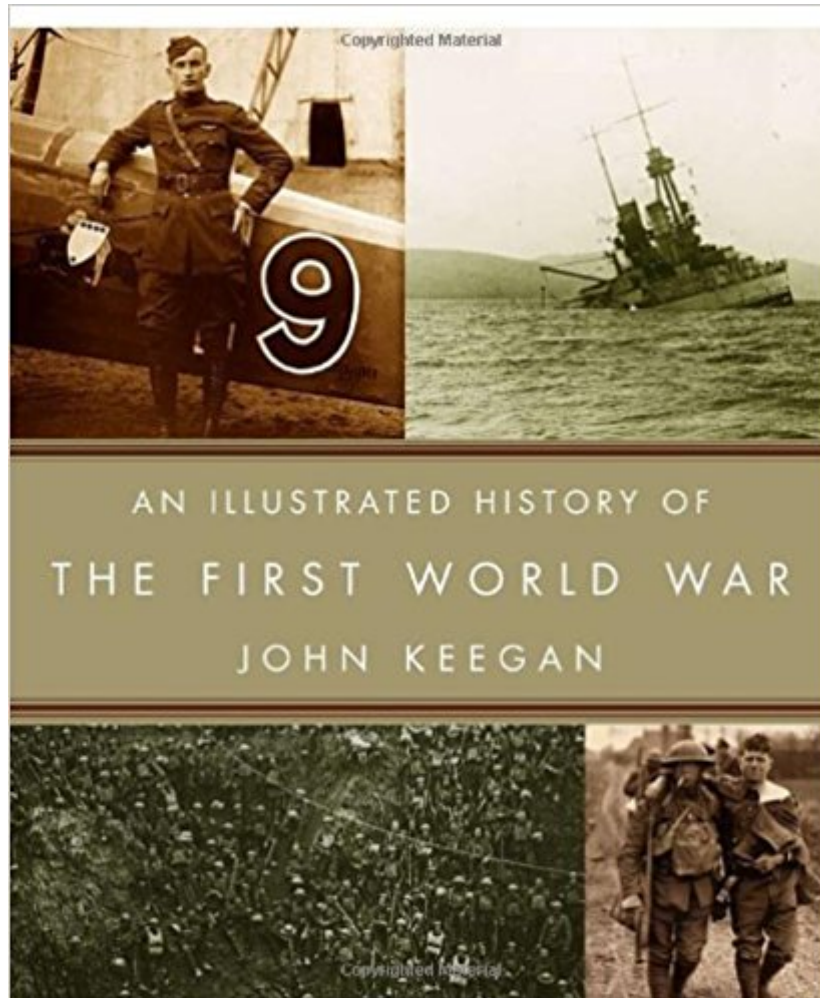




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# **An Illustrated History Of The First World War**



## Synopsis

John Keegan's *The First World War* was everywhere praised, and became the definitive account of the war that created the modern world. The New York Times Book Review acclaimed Keegan as "the best military historian of our day," and the Washington Post called the book "a grand narrative history [and] a pleasure to read." Now Keegan gives us a lavishly illustrated history of the war, brilliantly interweaving his narrative--some of it derived from his classic work and some of it new--with a brilliant selection of photographs, paintings, cartoons and posters drawn from archives across Europe and America, some published here for the first time. These images take us into the heart of battles that have become legend: Ypres, Gallipoli, Verdun, the Somme. They show us the generals' war and the privates' war--young soldiers, away from home for the first time, coming of age under fire. We see how a civilization at the height of its power and influence crippled itself as the faith in progress, rationalism and liberalism that had prevailed in Europe since the Enlightenment was shattered. We see how four empires--the German, the Russian, the Austro-Hungarian and the Ottoman--collapsed, and how the seeds for the Second World War were planted. Keegan tells how ambition, mistrust and failures of diplomacy and communication all played a part in allowing this conflict to set ablaze what was then the world's most prosperous society. And he describes how the effects of this war lasted long after it ended; its ghosts still haunt Europe today. *An Illustrated History of the First World War* carries us across the Europe of nearly a century ago, revealing the devastation, camaraderie, political machinations and battlefield maneuverings that changed the world. It presents the essential cast of that cataclysmic drama, from the decision makers at the top--Haig, Joffre, Hindenberg, Pershing--to the troops in the trenches. Through its unique amalgam of pictorial and narrative brilliance, the book illuminates the war as no other work has done.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Matching nearly 500 photographs, maps, and prints to a thoughtful, interpretive text, renowned military historian John Keegan again turns his attention to "the war to end all wars." The outbreak of World War I, Keegan notes, caught many Europeans and Americans by surprise. "Europe in the summer of 1914," he writes, "enjoyed a peaceful productivity so dependent on international co-operation that a belief in the impossibility of general war seemed the most conventional of wisdoms." That wisdom was quickly shattered with the onset of hostilities in the Balkans, which soon swept the continent and the world. Keegan takes a large view of events (the massive, multimillion-man offensives along the fronts, for instance) while recalling the agonies (and occasional triumphs) of countless individuals on both sides of the conflict. As he writes, Keegan offers a number of correctives (against other historians, for instance, he asserts that German forces indeed committed atrocities in Belgium), and he catalogs the blunders and disorders that cost each side needlessly and dearly. No contemporary historian is better equipped than Keegan for his subject, and this book merits a place on the shelf of every student of modern history. -- Gregory McNamee

The text of this work is essentially a stripped-down version of Keegan's 2001 *The First World War*, with the text complemented by superb visuals. Keegan has selected almost 500 photographs, posters, drawings and maps, a cross-section of material produced by all the major combatants and clarified by Keegan's extensive captions. Focusing heavily on the ordinary men and women who bore the main burdens, the illustrations combine to show the conflict's face from the front lines to the home fronts, bringing immediacy to events and experiences increasingly remote. Those who haven't already read the earlier work will also appreciate Keegan's ability to move easily from the infantrymen's trenches to the generals' headquarters and diplomats' chambers. He discusses tactics and technology, politics and diplomacy, with intellectual flair and in prose whose elegance reflects his backgrounds as journalist and scholar. Like an increasing number of historians, Keegan regards the Great War, with its unprecedented levels of slaughter, as the defining event of the 20th century. (He believes WWII, the later, larger conflict, can only be understood in terms of the issues unresolved and created between 1914 and 1918.) That Europe's people and leaders risked everything in a war whose causes in no way justified its costs remains for Keegan easier to describe

than to explain. His narrative of the conflict's sorrow and its pity is, however, as good an introduction for general readers as is to be found in print anywhere. And the high-quality illustrations should tempt even owners of the original to add this to their libraries. (Nov.)Forecast: This season "belongs" to World War II remembrances based around Pearl Harbor, so this book's release lacks an obvious hook and may be overshadowed. Still, its quality should render it a steady seller off more thoughtful gift tables.Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc.

Book in very good condition. Would be a nice companion to my other WW1 books.

After reading Keegan's terrific history of The Great War I was excited to have this photographic companion volume. However it is not nearly the quality I expected. There are many outstanding pictures and beautiful artists renderings of the worldwide conflict including some very good images of the many colonial troops who participated in the war. Their contributions are under-appreciated or rarely mentioned in other sources. Terrific portraits of the military leaders of most countries involved too but none of the political personalities except the Kaiser; no Clemenceau, Lloyd George et al. It feels like the authors and editors rushed to put this book together. Photos are comically mislabeled such as one of a group of Russian soldiers supposedly taken in August of 1914. They are all wearing greatcoats, some wearing fur hats and the trees are bare of leaves so where and when was this photo actually taken? And how many other photos might be mislabeled but not so easily identified? Maps included aren't bad but there are instances where the text refers to a specific place that isn't shown anywhere on the map which defeats the purpose of having a map included with the text. Keegan's history of WWI stands as one of the best. For a photographic history of the conflict, I am sure there must be better choices.

I bought this book when the author was going to be giving an address on the reopening of the World War I memorial in Kansas City. Unfortunately illness caused cancellation of the event but meanwhile I had bought his book and found it a wonderful resource and overview. My grandfather having been an infantry officer killed in the final days of the war has always had me interested in learning more about the causes and execution of the war. This book added to my knowledge and I can highly recommend it both for its pictures and more for its detailed history of the War. The new museum in Kansas City is well worth a visit if you are in the area and this book will help understand the many great exhibits you would see there.

Excellent overall coverage in photo and text by a superb historian.

As a cocktail table book its fine. As a history book very lightweight. Expected something meatier from Keegan.

Excellent, prompt service!

This book was an excellent addition to those textbooks prescribed for students studying this period of history. Well illustrated. Book was delivered promptly and in excellent condition.

Very good historyNEEDS MORE MAPS!!

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