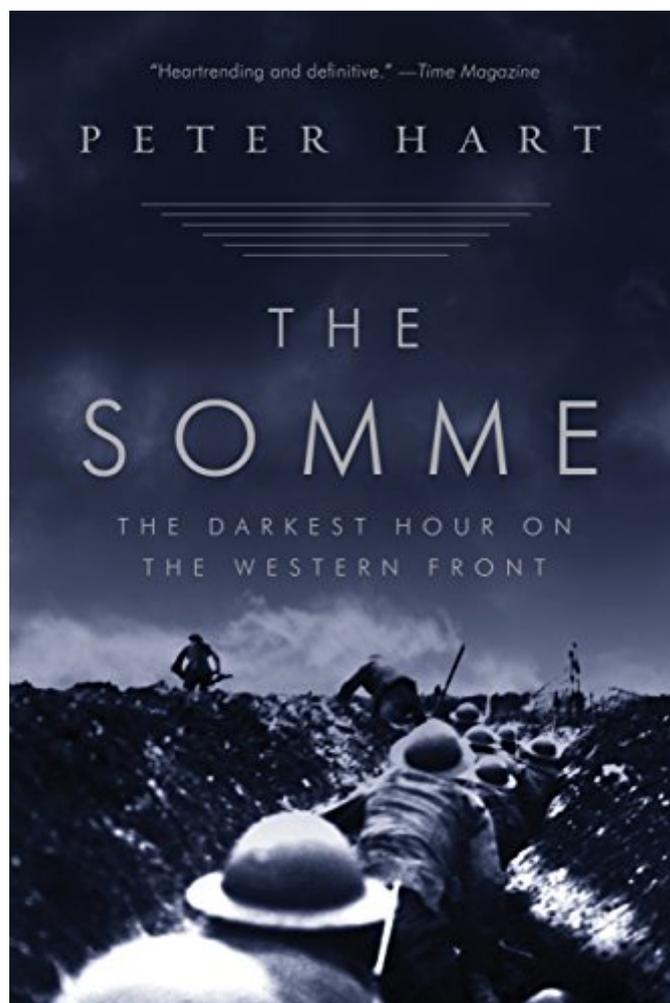


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# The Somme: The Darkest Hour On The Western Front



## Synopsis

One of the bloodiest battles in world historyâa military tragedy that would come to define a generation. On July 1, 1916, the British Army launched the âBig Pushâ that was supposed to bring an end to the horrific stalemate on the Western Front between British, French, and German forces. What resulted was one of the greatest single human catastrophes in twentieth century warfare. Scrambling out of trenches in the face of German machine guns and artillery fire, the Allied Powers lost over twenty thousand soldiers that first day. This âbattleâ would drag on for another four bloody months, resulting in over one million casualties among the three powers. As the oral historian at the Imperial War Museum in London, Peter Hart has brought to light new material never before seen or heard. The Somme is an unparalleled evocation of World War Iâs iconic contestâthe definitive account of one of the major tragedies of the twentieth century.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

'The Somme'. To many people these few words have come to be bywords for murder, mayhem and pointless slaughter. They conjure up views of Chateau Generals and poor Tommy Atkins living in fetid trenches waiting an untimely death in a hail of machine gun bullets. At long last we have a book which challenges this often heard view of the battle of the Somme. For nearly 90 years many eminent military historians have helped to colour the views of our nation with the same old bigoted,

jaundiced and ill informed view of this great but tragic battle. In this work Peter Hart looks at the battle in a logical and orderly manner. The book starts by giving the reasons why Douglas Haig was forced into fighting on the chalk downlands of the Somme. Once the political reasons for the battle are covered he moves smoothly to the tumultuous first day. This starts at Gommecourt and steadily moves southwards along the battleline to Maricourt on the banks of the river Somme. All through the text one sees an educated analysis of the opening day's events, which are greatly aided by new facsimiles of the Official Histories maps. Upon the conclusion of the first day the reader is then taken through the further battles that comprise the Battle of the Somme. All the time there is logical analysis of the Generals actions. In many parts one is made aware of unforgivable errors made by Haig, Rawlinson and others which lead to the death of many thousands of men. But one is also made aware of incidents that will hopefully lay down the myth of Lions led by Donkeys! The analysis of the battles is clear and concise, sticking to known facts. All too often we are served up myth and legend, in what are frankly pseudo histories of this conflict.

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